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Newcomer

It was Thursday, 7:57 am, when a woman was seen hurrying to get into the elevator before the doors close. Good thing there was a good guy who looked back and held the door for her.

She said her thanks to the guy while carefully fits her small frame in the crowd, making sure that the espresso to-go she's holding is still in one piece.

As soon as the doors opened to her desired floor, she went out immediately --- almost running --- trying to make it to her station before the clock strikes eight o'clock.

"On the dot, Jennie."

Jennie heard a voice from behind. She saw her friend approaching, "Hey, Rosé, how are you?"

"I'm a bit stressed. My partner wasn't here for a few days," said Rosé, rolling her eyes. "I'm surprised though. I thought you'll be on leave until Friday?"

Jennie chuckled at her friend's reaction. "It was a three-day vacation. I cannot afford to have a whole week off and attend countless unfinished tasks when I get back. That's suicide," she said while logging into her PC.

"Now that you mentioned it, I have been rendering OTs these last 3 days just to somehow make it up with the clients."

"I'm sorry. I'll make it up to you, I promise," said Jennie, letting out a guilty sweet smile.

"It's okay. It's nearly the end of the year and you haven't taken a single leave yet. You must unwind from time to time, Jen. You're so workaholic," said Rosé, waving her hand.

"Not really. I just don't want to take an off and get a double load of work after. It just doesn't make sense."

"Whatever. I'm just glad you took an off. At least."

After successfully logging in, Jennie composed herself by leaning her butt on the table with her coffee in her right hand. "So, how are things here?"

Rosé positioned herself too beside Jennie. "Well, same old stuff. Nothing new."

"I guess we should start doing the articles now. Can you email me all the---"

"Oh, shit," blurted Rosé out of the blue, her eyes trailing to something.

Getting interrupted, Jennie followed her friend's line of sight and saw a guy walking towards the ladies' room. She can't picture out the person's face clearly because he was wearing a cap.

Then it hit her.

"Did that guy just enter the ladies' room?" Asked Jennie, shocked.

Rosé sighed, slightly rolling her eyes, "Jen, she is not a guy."

"What? Why does she looked like that?"

"I'm sure you have seen a boyish lesbian at least once in your life, right?" Asked Rosé. "You have to admit, that one is a real hottie."

Jennie grimaced. "Oh, c'mon. You know I don't swing that way."

"But did you see her face? She's cute right?"

It made Jennie cringe even more. Call it old-fashioned, but still she can't grasp the idea of a female getting attracted to another female.

"Seriously? Rosé? You're asking me that question?"

Rosé, knowing her friend is a homophobic, decided not to push through.
"Okay, I know you're not really into this, but could you please help me on this one? I'd like to get to know her."

"Help you with what? Wait, wait, wait... How long has she been working here? Why didn't I notice her before?"

"She just started here this week, Monday, and you were on your leave, remember?"

"Oh, I see. Which department?"

"Graphics. Kai's department."

"Ahh. That's why you needed my help..." Said Jennie, deadpan.

"Exactly. I'm pretty sure Kai missed you so much. Why don't we pay him a visit instead?" Said Rosé, looping her arm through Jennie's.

"I could send him a message and tell him to go here."

"No! Let's just go to their department, please?" Rosé pleaded, making Jennie roll her eyes. "Please, please, pretty please? I just really want to get to know her. You told me you'd make it up to me, right?"

Knowing that she can't say no anymore, Jennie pinched the bridge of her nose. "Ugh! Why didn't you introduce yourself last Monday or yesterday? You didn't have to wait for me."

"I'm embarrassed, Jen. I know you'll never believe me, but I really feel shy around her..." Admitted Rosé.

Jennie wanted to say 'no', but Rosé's unfaltering puppy-look seem to have won over. "Fine. Fine, just this once, okay?"

"Eeeeeee!" Rosé jumped in excitement, forgetting that she's in the office.
"Oops."

Jennie shook her head, smirking. "You're crazy."

"I'm crazy about her!" Rosé giggled. And you know what? A lot of ladies have been lurking around this floor since she came in. Kai's department has been getting a lot of female visitors lately."

That finally ticked Jennie's curiosity. "Really? Wow, she must be a real catch."

"You want to see her too?"

"Just curious. But still, I'm not interested."

"That's good. At least you're not my competition."

"That will never gonna happen, Rosé." Jennie grabbed her bag and fished something inside. "Lemme just look for the souvenir I bought for Kai so we have a valid excuse to go there. I don't want to get accused by something that's not my interest."

"Eeeee! Thanks, Jennie!"

The Graphics Department is composed of less than ten employees, with Kai being the immediate supervisor. Jennie doesn't like the idea of going there often because she feels uncomfortable being alone in a male-dominated room. She prefers talking to Kai in some other places instead, in case her team needs something done from them.

"Hi, Kai." Said Rosé gleefully upon entering the room.

The man in front of the terminal couldn't hide the smile smearing across his face. He rose up to greet his visitors.

"Hi, Rosé, And, Jennie. I thought you were on leave?"

"I decided not to take a week-long vacation. I forsee myself swimming in papers on Monday." Said Jennie.

"Right... Right..." Kai's obvious gladness to see Jennie reflected in his chuckle. "I... Uhh.. I missed you..." He whispered, shoving his hands in his pockets.

"Eeee.. someone's in love." Rosé teased.

Jennie gave her friend a quick glare before handing Kai a small box. "For you."

"For me?"

"You're so kind for giving me souvenirs during your travels. I just thought of returning the favor."

"Thank you." Kai flipped the box on his hands, still smiling from ear-to-ear. "Did you guys bother yourselves coming over here just to give this?"

"No. We're here because a good friend of mine wants to meet your new staff," said Jennie side-glancing Rosé.

Rosé cleared her throat loudly.

"Oh." Kai smilee, getting what it meant. "These past few days were crazy. I've been getting a lot of visitors. They're looking for me but I guess they just want to check out somebody here."

"Where is she at?" Asked Rosé, scanning the room. Kai pointed at the farthest terminal in that area and Rosé stretched her neck as far as she could. "What's her name? Could you introduce us?"

"Rosé, I told you, I'm not interested." Jennie muttered.

Kai laughed at Jennie's reaction. He turned around and called out a name, "Lisa..."

The person sitting at the farthest terminal, who by the way so busy like she's kissing her monitor, looked up to them. "Yes?"

Jennie slightly raised an eyebrow. *Her voice is still girlish.*

Kai moved aside to see the faces of their visitors. "Just want to introduce to you these two beautiful ladies here, Jennie and Rosé. They are the assigned writers for some of our clients. They are from another department but we work together with them once in a while."

The newbie raised her hand for a wave. "Hi, I'm Lisa!"

Although Jennie can't see Lisa's face much from her angle, she knew that Lisa is smiling at them. She faked a smile and slightly shook her head.

Don't you dare think that I went here because I am curious about you.

Rosé immediately approached Lisa. "Hi! I'm Rosé!"

Jennie couldn't believe what she's seeing.

This woman is really something. Do I remember someone telling me earlier that she was shy?

"You know, I'm starting to feel envious of Lisa." said Kai, making Jennie look at him. "Since she came here last Monday, a lot of girls visiting us. This is the first time it happened considering that, aside from Tzuyu, we're all boys here."

"Hmm. What exactly are they doing here?"

"I dunno." Kai shrugged. "Maybe checking her out? Asking questions and stuff? But yeah, it's really nothing important."

"Wow. Some kind of a welcome for a newcomer, huh? And how does she take it? The visitors?" Jennie glanced back at Lisa's direction but Rosé is already blocking the view.

"Well, I have to admit that Lisa gave a satisfactory first impression." said Kai, playing the souvenir box in his hands. "She is kind and gentle, not to mention that she's really good in designing. I've been working with her for days now and see no attitude problems so far. She entertains everyone with a smile; maybe a reason why they kept on coming back here."

Both their attention was caught by Rosé's sudden flirtatious laugh. Jennie smiled secretly.

Hmm, I bet someone is having a good day.

Still, her mind just can't contain the idea of females going crazy over another good-looking female. Whatever quake this newcomer brought to their office, Jennie is purely not affected by it.

Friday

It was lunch and as part of her daily routine, Jennie is heading to washroom to brush her teeth. She was walking slowly, thinking how she almost lost her patience with Rosé earlier who keeps talking about Lisa the entire morning.

It's not only Rosé. Majority of the population in their office were thrilled to meet the new employee. Jennie cannot fathom why is everyone is making a big fuss out of it to the point that it's starting to irritate her.

She was about to enter the ladies' room when she was blocked by the two girls walking out. They were giggling.

"So handsome!"

"Did you notice that she looked at me first?"

Jennie shook her head and follow the two girls with her eyes. She knew those two were talking about the good-looking newcomer. Her mind was too occupied to notice that another person was coming out of the door.

"Oops, sorry," a gentle-apologetic voice said after they slightly bumped into each other.

Jennie looked up and gawked at the sight in front of her. She didn't notice that her mouth was ajar. This is the first time she got a complete view of

this newcomer. Jennie is standing at Lisa's eye level even with her 3' heeled-shoes.

When their eyes met, Lisa smiled.

She finally got the chance to witness the legendary smile that majority of the women in her office fell for. It wasn't as epic as she was expecting but she had to admit that a jolt hit her body. With that instant moment, she finally understood the reason why people are were dazzled by this newcomer.

"S-sorry." Jennie mumbled.

Shit. Why am I stuttering?

"Its okay, no worries."

Jennie smelled the strong scent of a mouthwash coming from Lisa's mouth. It made her look into Lisa's lips which are so red now. Good thing it was her that Lisa bumped into. The whole office might be surprised to see a kissing scene near the ladies' room if it had been Rosé.

Lisa was about to walk out of the scene. Noticing it, Jennie moved to her left to let Lisa pass. However, Lisa moved in the same direction, her way is still being blocked by Jennie.

Jennie moved to her right instead to give way, realizing that Lisa did the same.

"Oh my..." Lisa chuckled.

Jennie didn't notice that she was smiling too. *That mouthwash surely smells good.*

"Okay, let's do it this way," Lisa said, gripping on Jennie's shoulders. "You go to your right, and I'll go to my right, okay?"

Wearing an off-shoulder top, Jennie felt warmth of Lisa's palm on her exposed shoulders. She nodded, not really sure if she understood what she

was told.

"Okay." Lisa went right and started walking away in that area.

Jennie continued walking inside the ladies' room. She put down her things on the rack and placed both her hands on the edge of the counter. She took a deep breath and stared at herself in the mirror, feeling her heart which is beating two times faster now.

Shit. What did just happen?

Anniversary

Lisa glanced back at the ladies' room entrance to check if the little woman is still there.

She's one of the girls Kai introduced yesterday. What was her name again?

"Lisa..."

She turned around and see the other girl the small one was with yesterday.
"Oh, hey."

"Do you still remember me?"

Lisa squinted her eyes. "Hmm, Rosé, right?"

It made the woman clap her hands with joy. "I'm glad you remember!"

"Of course. So, this is where you at?"

"Yes. We're located at the center of this floor. Jennie is sitting across mine," Rosé said, pointing at the table behind her.

Lisa shifted her eyes to where Rosé is pointing and saw a table with lots of stuffed toys. The biggest of them is a green alien.

"You remember her, right? She's the petite girl who's with me yesterday," asked Rosé.

Yeah, she was the one in the ladies' room awhile ago.

"Yeah, I remember. I can tell she liked stuffed toys, eh?" said Lisa.

"She's a kid at heart," Rosé whispers, "but sometimes a monster."

Lisa chuckled. "That's cute though. So, she's fond of aliens?"

"Yeah, she loves them so much. How about you, what are the things you're fond of?"

"Hmm. I love taking pictures."

"Pictures? Like portraits?"

"Yeah, it's a hobby since I was in high school. Guess I've developed a skill out of it," said Lisa, resting both her arms on the terminal.

"That's interesting. What are your subjects then?" Rosé stood up from her chair so they could talk closer.

"Anything interesting, nature, landscapes, animals; but I'm more focused on humans."

Rosé's face lit up. "Wow. That's cool. If I may ask, why humans?"

"All cool," said Lisa, smiling. "I just find contentment from looking at a human shot, a smiling human to be exact. I love smiles."

Rosé kept nodding. "Do you think I can be one of your models?"

"Yeah, you sure to be not the camera-shy type."

Rosé giggled after hearing that. "Of course I'm not. Do you usually prefer taking pictures outdoors or indoors?"

"I do both. I travel before to take outdoors pictures. As for indoors, I don't have a studio yet so I usually do it in my place."

Rosé's mouth formed an 'o' shape. "You live alone?"

"Mmm-mmm."

"Where do you live then?"

Lisa held off answering after getting a glimpse of Jennie from her peripheral vision. Unconsciously, she was expecting a little welcome from

this person. To her surprise, Jennie just walked past them and went straight to her terminal without even saying hi.

Getting a bit disappointed, Lisa turned back to Rosé and decided to play it cool. "Just around the corner."

"Oh, I bet you've already bought a lot of girls in your apartment?" Rosé teased.

"Huh? No. No. I'm not that type of person." Lisa chuckled as she shakes her head. She instinctively looked at Jennie and noticed that the latter's head is slightly tilted to Rosé's direction.

"I hate to say this, but the looks of yours, I don't believe you, Lisa." said Rosé.

"Haha. I'm not like that. I do things professionally."

"Fine, if you say so. By the way, do you have plans later after work?"

"Yup, why?" Lisa took one last quick glance and noticed that Jennie is already doing something on her computer.

"Going out with friends on a Friday night?"

"Something like that. Why do you ask?"

"I'm planning to shop around after work. I was just if you'd like to go with me?" said Rosé, smiling wildly.

"Uh, well, I'd love to, but I can't cancel this one. It's an anniversary celebration," said Lisa shyly.

"You already have a girlfriend???"

Lisa laughed. "No. No. It's my friend's."

Rosé's face became gloomy. "Ooh, that's sad..."

"I'll make it up to you next time."

Rosé's eyes sparkled with the idea. "You promise?"

"Of course."

"Yes!" Rosé raised both her hands as if had won a contest.

Lisa couldn't believe what's happening to her. Her first week in her first job wasn't bad, in fact, it was perfect. She's been receiving warm welcomes from everyone except for this one specific lady.

She looked back at Jennie's direction and noticed the latter secretly smiling. Lisa smiled to herself.

Hmm.. she's listening...

Lisa's Apartment

Lisa unlocked the door and entered the unlit room. She switched the light on, bringing brightness in the entire place. Then she went directly to the fridge, grabbed a Vodka Cruiser and sat on the couch with her arms and legs stretched out.

She sipped from the bottle, staring lost at the wall.

What she told Rosé earlier was true, she's really going to celebrate an anniversary,. However, she's doing it alone.

Sigh. It's been a year now.

"What? You're leaving?" asked Lisa, shocked. She's sitting in the same spot on her couch.

"I got accepted into this modeling agency in Singapore."

"Why didn't you tell me about this before?"

"Because I didn't know that I had the chance to get in."

"W-when are you leaving then?"

"The day after tomorrow."

"What? How long?"

"It's a year contract, Lisa."

"One year? That's a long time, Irene."

"I know. That's why I came here, to let you know."

"Just like that?"

"Why? We're you expecting something else?"

Lisa attempted to speak but no words came out of her mouth. It took her time before she was able to blurt out what's going on her mind.

"W-what's going to happen to us?"

Irene stood in silence for awhile. She then exhaled. "Lisa... I... I admit that I felt something for you these past few months. It was special, really.."

Lisa felt her heart beating faster this time. The anticipation is bringing her agony.

"But..."

"Irene---"

"But I am still unsure of this."

"U-unsure? W-what the hell is that?"

"Lisa, you are completely aware that my biggest dream is to become a model, right?"

"I know."

"And I am expecting that you would be the first person to understand why I am taking this opportunity."

"But, Hyuuun..."

Irene didn't say anything. She stood up there silent, eye focused on the floor.

"Do you love me?" Lisa finally asked.

Irene was taking time to respond. A long silence drifted between them.

"Just tell me right now, do you love me?" Lisa insisted.

Irene shrugged. "I... I don't know..."

"You don't know? Then what is this we're having now? What do you call this?"

"I don't know. I don't know!" Irene finally looked into Lisa's eyes.

Lisa stared at Irene's eyes and noticed nothing else but confusion. She knows the reason why.

"I know this is about my studies, right?"

"It's not like that. I just have a dream."

"Can't I be part of that dream?"

"How can you be part of it? All you do is just fool around. You're never serious about anything."

"So, it really is about my studies."

"Lisa, I don't blame you for being a rich man's brat, okay? But being with you for a quite a while made me realize that you don't have plan in your life. You even quit school just to travel around and take pictures of people everywhere."

"It's just one more year, Hyun. If you want, I can enroll next semester to finish my last year in college."

"That's not my point. I just don't think you're serious about me either."

Lisa stared at Irene directly, stunned.

"Whatever this is we're having now, this has to stop. Besides, I'm leaving. It would be better if we go our separate ways." Irene turned around heading to the door.

"Irene... I... I lo ----"

"Stop it, Lisa. Don't say that just because you felt you need to say it at this moment."

Lisa bit her lip and looked down instead.

Irene turned back to her. "I'll be back after a year. I guess we both need to do a lot of thinking about our own lives, about us. I'm not even sure if what we're feeling right now is momentary or not."

Lisa nodded.

"I'll keep the duplicate keys of your floor for now. I'll return them to you when I come back. From there we can decide if we should take whatever we're having now to the next level or just remain friends."

"Joo-hyun..."

Irene smiled. "After a year, Lali, I promise. I'll just barge in your door just like I always do."

Even though it was against her will, Lisa forced a smile.

Lisa stood up from the couch and went into a small room beside her bedroom. She turned the lights on and framed photos appeared after hiding from the darkness. The biggest one is a gorgeous girl that looked so cheerful sitting on a bed. She's wearing a white satin dress and her eyes were so joyful that the positive vibe reflecting on the image will make you smile just by looking at it.

Lis stared at the photo and touched it.

Hyun, it's been a year now. Should I still be waiting for you

Hickey

After one month, the team-building event finally came. It is something that they do annually to strengthen the bond and cooperation within each team.

Unlike last year, where the even took place during summer and held in a beach resort, this year will be held in a hotel resort instead to avoid rains. Unfortunately, the event was approved to take place on the latter part of the year, the season when the southwest monsoon is dominating.

Since they are a large-scaled size company, the management has decided that the outing will be held by batch. All the employees sharing the same floors will go together the same day.

Jennie is currently looking out the window. They are riding a coaster on board to their destination. If it weren't for the lovey-dovey couple beside that keeps on distracting her, she would've enjoy the scene outside.

"How many are you on your team again?" Rosé asked Lisa, her back completely facing Jennie.

Lisa relaxed her head first on the backrest while mentally counting her team-mates. "We're seven, including Kai."

This time, Rosé wrapped her arms around Lisa's. "What do you guys usually do during your free time? I'm curious, how does the group of artists like you bond?"

"Mmm, we're making fun of each other most of the time." Lisa chuckled as if she remembered something funny. "The most common is editing someone's picture."

"Like?"

"Like putting Kai's head on a body of a sexy-porn-star! Hahaha!"

"Hihihi. So cute! I kinda want to see that sexy version of Kai."

"You bet his hot!"

The two just kept on laughing. Jennie can't help but smile too while imagining Kai's picture. She's not sure if she should be eavesdropping or not but she can't help overhearing their conversation.

She didn't plan on being where she's at right now. It was Rosé who wanted them to sit beside each other. It was too late when Jennie found out that Rosé's plan was to put her on the third wheel.

After the long laughing session, Lisa spoke, "How about yours, what do you guys do for fun?"

"We usually play the game 'answer the question with a question'," said Rosé, leaning her head on Lisa's shoulder.

"Answer a question with a question? What's that?"

"The mechanics are simple; someone starts a question and you just have to keep answering each other with questions."

"Wow. Sounds hard."

"Yeah, I'm always the one who loses first." Rosé pouted.

"Does everyone in your department participate in the game?" Lisa asked.

"Yeah, everyone. We even form a circle to make it more fun."

"Well, it just seems to me that you have some serious teammates in your department," said Lisa, nudging her chin towards Jennie.

Rosé, who had almost completely forgotten that they are not alone on the bus, and that Jennie is sitting beside her shifted her body and hugged Jennie this time.

"It may not seem like that but Jennie can be a jolly person, Lisa."

"Oh really? I guess I haven't seen that part of her yet." Lisa teased.

Since they were introduced, Rosé has been showing Lisa the above-the-normal-kindness a person could show to a colleague. On the other hand, Jennie was the opposite. Although she's not doing anything to annoy Lisa, she isn't minding the newcomer like she's non-existent in the first place.

Jennie continued to stare outside, pretending not to hear what Lisa and Rosé were talking about. Unknown to everyone, Jennie is purposely ignoring Lisa, not because she's irritated or what, but because she just doesn't like to be branded as one of Lisa's victims.

"You might see it sooner once you start doing a project together," said Rosé, grabbing Lisa's arm again.

"I can't wait for it, Rosé."

Jennie eyed Lisa for a second, giving her you'll-be-dead-when-that-time-comes glare.

Lisa saw it and chuckled. "Hey, miss, I'll think you'll be prettier if you'll add a little smile on your face," she said, giving out the most warmest smile she could.

It's effective most of the time but instead of Jennie, it was Rosé who fell for that smirk.

"Weeeee! You're so cute, Lisa."

Although it may appear that she's snobbish, Jennie cannot deny how she was moved by that smile. Lisa has this certain charm, an irresistible charm, like a magnet, which can make any female hormones go wild.

Just to clear it up, she doesn't hate Lisa. In fact, she agrees to the idea that Lisa is kind, nice and gentle, and whatever. However, she sees Lisa's kindness as an act of flirting. Lisa's flirting with all the girls that she knows are interested in her. Jennie had sworn to the idea of not joining the fan club.

While Rosé is pinching Lisa, Jennie showed Lisa her sarcastic smile with one eyebrow raised.

"Do you know what this smile means?"

Lisa raised both hands. "Easy, easy there, princess. You're so serious. I just want some attention from her highness."

"Huh? Who are you calling princess? Princess your face," said Jennie, rolling her eyes.

"You don't want princess? What do you prefer then, Amazon?"

Jennie bit her lip and gave Lisa the death glare.

Lisa smelled trouble. She knew she'd be dead if she'll continue. She signalled a peace sign on her left hand and said, "Peace! The last thing I wanted to do is to get in trouble with an Amazon."

"You ---"

Jennie didn't know what's gotten into her. She felt the urge to pinch Lisa's arm for punishment but since Rosé is holding on it tightly, she went for the cheek instead.

"You want attention, right? Here it is!"

"Aw! Aw! Ow!"

Jennie let go of her victim. "Hmp!"

Lisa rubbed a palm over her abused cheek. "For a small hands like yours, it really hurts big time, you know.."

Lisa took her hand off her cheek and Rosé gasped. "Oh, my... Jennie, I think you went a little too far on that."

"What?" Lisa doesn't have a single clue about it.

Jennie looked at the reddened cheek and poked it. "Does it still hurt?"

"Hell yeah..."

"I guess it left a mark on your face, Lisa," admitted Jennie, sounding apologetic.

Weird. She looks cute even with that red mark.

"What?" Lisa covered her cheek right away. "Is it gonna stay there long?"

"I think so. I might have pinched you way too harder."

"Yeah, I can still feel your fingers --- no, your nails --- on my face . Jeez! Does it look bad?" Lisa showed them her cheeks again.

For once, Rosé and Jennie agreed on one thing about Lisa and immediately shook their heads no.

"It's actually looks like a kiss mark. Check it." Rosé handed Lisa a small mirror.

Lisa stared at her right cheek. "I can't believe it. Jennie left a hickey on my face."

"What did you say?!" Jennie reacted so hard because she imagined how it was done.

"It really does it look like a hickey, Jennie. Now I'm getting jealous." said Rosé.

"How long is it gonna be here?" asked Lisa, still looking at the mirror.

Rosé took a closer look. "Maybe for a day or two."

Lisa returned the mirror to Rosé. "Jeez, Jennie. You left a hickey on the most obvious part of my body. Tsk. Tsk. Tsk."

Jennie rolled her eyes. "It's not intentional, and it's not a hickey."

"What should I call it then?"

"I don't know." Jennie shrugged. "Maybe call it a bruise or a pinch mark perhaps?"

"I knew it! It's an Amazon's curse!"

Jennie rolled her eyes and turned back to the window.

After an hour the lovey-doves became silent. Jennie didn't notice it because she was astounded by the beautiful scenery they are passing by. She glanced to her right and found Lisa and Rosé sleeping. Rosé's head was firmly resting on Lisa's shoulder with her arms interlocked in Lisa's arm. The latter's head was also comfortably leaning on Rosé's.

Just as I thought, you're really flirty.

They end up in a high-end hotel resort. The place is specifically designed for events. It has its own bar and restaurant inside. There's also an art museum and facilities for recreational activities.

Since they were the last batch of employees to go out for an outing, they were also the fewest. They are staying there for two days and one night. Employees were divided into two persons per room.

Of course, Jennie shares the room with Rosé. Although it is obvious that Rosé wants Lisa to be her roommate, she doesn't want to leave Jennie hanging. Lisa was partnered with Tzuyu, one of the graphic artist in their department. Tzuyu doesn't talk much; in fact, it's hard to get a reaction from her. Sometimes it's better to talk to a wall than to talk to Tzuyu.

"I am so glad I'll be staying in the same room with Kai!" Suho gladly announced to Jennie and Rosé. He is also one of the writers in their department who's openly gay.

"How in the world did you do it? Did you ask someone to exchange rooms?" asked Rosé curiously, as if wanting to exchange rooms with

Tzuyu.

"No, no! That is called 'fate darling.'" Suho replied with conviction.

"Oooh, someone has his lucky day." Jennie nudged him. Everyone in the offices knows of his major crush on Kai.

Suho laughed out loud with his excitement. "I can't wait for this day to end so we could all go to our rooms and sleep. Wihihihhi."

"Are you going to make Kai a bad boy tonight?" Rosé knows what's on Suho's mind.

"Hihhi. Don't worry, I'll save some for Jennie."

Rosé saw Lisa and Tzuyu passing by the area. "Hey, Lisa, which room are you staying at?"

Lisa looked down at the paper in her hand. "Uh, 303. How about you?"

Jennie smiled upon seeing Lisa's reddened cheek. She still can't believe that she had done that.

"We're in 301," Rosé answered.

"Okay. We'll see you then." Lisa smiled.

"Well," Rosé continued, "if you get bored, you could come to our room. I'll give you a real hickey this time."

"Wow. That was straight, Rosé!" said Suho.

Jennie facepalmed herself, feeling embarrassed at Rosé's flirting. Unconsciously, she studied Lisa's reaction.

Lisa blushed and scratched her head. She gestured that she'll be going to their room now.

After all the activities for the day, they all retired to their rooms. Jennie was amused by the faces of some female colleagues who were obviously jealous of the idea that a girl had put a hickey on Lisa's face. Lisa didn't say anything about it nor answered any questions. She just smiled at them. Although Jennie is not sure, she's feeling that Lisa is doing that to protect her from the possible fury of the fan girls.

She may not admit it to herself but she's a bit proud of it, to be the reason of that 'hickey'. And the funny thing about it is that Lisa seems to be proud of it too. It's like she's indirectly telling her fan girls, although not true, that she has a girlfriend. But this is what Jennie hopes for, yeah, she's hoping that Lisa thinks the same way.

"Where are you going? It's already ten o'clock," Rosé asked when she saw her friend preparing to go outside.

Jennie raised her phone. "I'm gonna call my mom. Signal here is jammed."

"Oh. Then I'll be just staying here, okay?"

"Yeah, you should be. Lisa might stop by, you know. I guess I better disappear for a while."

Although she said it that way, Jennie is hoping that it won't happen. She doesn't like Lisa the way the others do but she knows she'll completely turned off if Lisa will really show up tonight.

Jennie ended the call with her mom when it's started raining. She's far from the hotel room right now and needs to find a place to shed for a while or else she'll be dripping wet.

Stupid rain! Why now? I need to hurry back to the room. Lisa might go there.

Although she was hoping that Lisa won't do that, there's still a part in her that knows the possibility. It's not impossible though since Lisa and Rosé

have this "flirtatious relationship". All she wanted right now is to go back to her room so she could see it herself, or maybe distract Rosé and Lisa incase they've decided to have their hickey-moment.

Stupid rain is getting harder. It has been cloudy the entire day, maybe a reason for the hard rainfall tonight. She found a small unoccupied cottage, the one with a roof and one table only. Perfect place to shed until the rain stops.

Jennie sat on the table while attempting to dry herself with her handkerchief. She's only wearing denim short and a sleeveless shirt. The little rain exposure made her look like she's already drenched.

The night is almost turning bad for her. Suddenly, she heard a clank sound of a bottle hitting the metal table she's sitting on. She turned around.

Who's that?

The person behind greeted her with a wide grin.

"Hey, 'sup, Amazon?"

Closer

"Hey, 'sup, Amazon?"

"W-what are you doing here?"

Jennie was surprised. On the back of her head, she never thought that she'd be relieved to hear someone call her Amazon at the moment.

"I was about to ask you the same thing," said Lisa, taking a sip from the bottle she's holding.

"Are you following me?"

"Excuse me, following you? I should be the one asking you that."

Realizing what Lisa said, Jennie played the handkerchief with her hands. "H-how long have you been here?"

"An hour ago, before you came running here like a lost child."

"Oh, I didn't notice you earlier."

Apparently, Lisa was wearing a black hooded jacket and black Bermuda shorts, making her unnoticeable in the dark. "I figured that out, don't worry."

Jennie didn't say anything. Her mind was flying. A minute ago, she was worried if Lisa would be spending the night with Rosé -- she's not sure why she's worried in the first place -- and now she feels relieved to see Lisa just in front of her boozing on a liquor.

Without any warning, Lisa gently threw a small towel on Jennie's face, making the latter frown. "Dry yourself up, you're a mess."

Jennie stared at the towel first, then to Lisa. *Being nice to me, huh?*

"Don't worry. I haven't use that one yet, princess."

"Ooh.. Thanks.." Jennie couldn't understand why the endearment sounded sweeter this time. "So, what are you doing here alone?"

"Just thinking about some random stuff. You?"

"I was on the phone with my mom before it rained."

"Ahhh."

"I, uh, I thought you were gonna be with Rosé tonight."

Lisa gave her a confused look. "In your room?"

"Yup."

"What am I gonna do in your room then?"

"Well... You know, Rosé giving you a real hickey?"

Lisa was about to drink from the bottle but she stopped. "Seriously? Do you really think I'd do that?"

Jennie nodded. She lied.

"What? Are you kidding me? I won't do something like that, at least not with a random person," said Lisa, slightly panicking.

"Well... I thought you and Rosé were..."

"We're what?"

"I don't know... Flirting?"

Lisa burst out laughing. "C'mon, Jennie, seriously? Do you really think of me like that?"

Jennie nodded hesitantly. "W-weren't you?"

"Jennie, the last time I checked, the term 'being nice' is not synonymous with 'flirting'."

"You can't blame me," said Jennie, scratching her itchy arm. "You're too nice to Rosé, well, to all your fan girls actually. I thought you're just playing with everyone."

"Well, can't I be nice to people who are nice to me too?"

Jennie pouted her lips, mentally agreeing to what Lisa is trying to point out. "I guess you could say that." She sat on the table with her back facing Lisa. "Sorry."

"For?"

"I'm sorry for having that kind of impression on you."

"No worries." Lisa took another sip from the bottle. "Were you thinking that I was flirting with you too?"

"I didn't mean it that way." Jennie knew that Lisa is teasing her. Good thing she is sitting on the other side of the table, making it easy for her to hide her blushing face from Lisa.

"Ooooh, do you think you're seducible?" asked Lisa in a charming teasing tone.

"Arg! I hate you!"

Lisa stood up and walked towards Jennie, one hand in her pocket. "And what was that fan girls you mentioned a while ago?"

Jennie avoided Lisa's eyes. "I won't believe you if you would say that you're not aware how many girls are swooning over you," she said, running her palms up and down her arms, trying to create a warm friction from the cold weather.

Lisa noticed the gesture and had a notion that Jennie is feeling cold. She motioned the tip of the bottle on Jennie's side and asked, "Do you mind?"

Jennie shook her head.

"Thanks." She sat beside Jennie, slowly squeezing her body to hers.

Jennie would've contested to what Lisa was doing but the warm feeling of the jacket against her body made her shut up. She knew what Lisa is thinking.

There was a moment of silence and all you can hear is the pouring rain.

"Can I stay close for a while?" asked Jennie.

Lisa nodded. "I would have lent you my jacket but that'll leave me naked."

Jennie snickered at that. "You're funny," she said, playfully hitting Lisa.

"Funny and flirty?"

"Just funny." Jennie noticed the red mark on Lisa's cheek. "Hey, does this one still hurt?"

"A bit."

Jennie laid an arm upon Lisa's back. She's comfortable with the warmth the jacket brings. She touched the red mark on Lisa's cheek with a fingertip.

"I'm sorry about this."

"It's okay. It's not everyday I get a hickey, especially not from an Amazon."

Jennie pressed the red mark with her thumb. "Stop teasing me, okay?"

"Aww! I'm not teasing you, Jennie. I'm flirting with you, haha!"

"Hmp!"

Jennie doesn't feel uncomfortable anymore. She's not sure if it's because Lisa had gained her trust or if it's because they are alone and she can freely let her guard down knowing that no one can see them.

"I guess we're stuck here until the rain stops," Lisa sighed.

"Why, are you already getting bored?"

"No, of course not."

Jennie poked Lisa's back. "Hey, why don't we play a game while we wait?"

"And what kind of game you propose?"

Jennie placed two fingers on her chin as she leans her entire body against Lisa's back. "Hmm, why don't we play the 'answer a question with a question'?"

"Ugh! Not that one." Lisa scratched her neck. "Rosé said it's a hard game."

"It's not hard. You just have to think carefully. Are you afraid of losing to me?"

"Hah. I'm not gonna let you win that easy, princess."

"So, is that a yes?"

"Bring it on. What's the penalty for the loser?"

"The loser should do anything the winner wishes."

"That's fine for me. Deal?" Lisa clenched her fist, asking for a fist bump.

"Deal." Jennie smacked her closed fist to Lisa's.

"Okay. You start the ball roll, Madame."

"Okay." Jennie put her fingers on her chin again while thinking. "How long do you think this rain will last?"

Lisa took a moment to respond, trying to make sure she'll get it right, "Do you want it to stop right away?"

"I'm just a bit worried. If this won't stop until tomorrow, what are we gonna do here?"

"Why? Do you think being stuck here with me is a bad idea?"

"But aren't you worried that I might bore you?"

Lisa smiled. "Where did you get the idea that you're boring?"

"And where did you get the idea that I don't wanna be around you?"

Lisa whipped her head to Jennie and turned away immediately when their eyes met.

Jennie, on the other hand, regret saying what just came out of her mouth. Her grip on Lisa's jacket tightened. She wanted to take it back however she doesn't want to lose as well. Then she noticed that Lisa's ears are reddened.

Lisa finally recovered. "Uhm.. so... you mean... After all the I-don't-want-you-around-me rapport you've established between us, you actually wanted us to be close?"

"What makes you think that I want us to be close?" said Jennie, rolling her eyes.

"Well.. y-you, you just said it a while ago, right?"

"Wanting to be around you means different from liking you, right?"

Lisa shrugged. "Is it really that impossible for you to like me?"

Jennie blushed a bit with that question. "Huh, do you really think you're that charming?"

"Didn't you just mention a while ago that I have fan girls?"

"But did I say I was one of them?"

Lisa sighed. "Seriously, didn't it occur to you once that you and I can be closer?"

"What do you mean by closer?"

"Are you thinking of something else aside from being friends?"

"If we became friends, do you think you could stick with my mood swings and tyranny?"

Lisa smiled. "Will you believe me if I tell you that I'd love to?"

Jennie struck by that momentarily. "Are you serious about what you're saying?"

"Do I look like I'm kidding?"

Jennie had to look away out of shyness. "You're drunk, aren't you?"

"Do I smell like drunken to you?"

"Then why are you asking me those kinds of questions?"

"Why? Are you uncomfortable in answering them?"

"Are you just teasing me or was that an attempt to flirt with me?"

"Oh, c'mon, Jennie. Isn't it obvious that I'm just teasing you?"

Jennie somehow felt disappointed. "You do that every time, with everyone, so how would I know?"

"Not unless you want me to flirt with you; do you want me to?"

"Ugh! What makes you think I want to?"

"Then why are you blushing, Jennie?"

Jennie's eyebrows furrowed. "Aren't you aware that your whole face is as red as tomato as well?"

Feeling embarrassed, both looked away from each other. Lisa looked up and Jennie hid on Lisa's back.

Jennie is already scolding herself for bringing that game up. She notice the almost-empty bottle on Lisa's right hand. She grabbed it.

"Hey, what's that?" Lisa watched Jennie drink all the remaining content of the bottle.

After finishing it, Jennie handed back the bottle to Lisa. "Why didn't you tell me it tastes good?"

Lisa looked at Jennie and at the bottle. She glanced back at the other woman, noticing Jennie's now reddened-wet-lips. Lisa looked back at the tip of the bottle.

"Did you.. enjoy it?..."

"Enjoyed what?"

Lisa was already thinking of the indirect kiss but didn't mention it, "Uh... Well... Vodka tastes good, right?"

Jennie nodded. She stared at Lisa for a while before finally speaking, "Lisa, can I ask you a question?"

"Aren't you asking me already?" Lisa joked.

Jennie's gave a playful slap. "I'm serious, okay?"

"Then what is it?"

Jennie's hand wandered on Lisa's back like she's playing Incy Wincy Spider song. "Do you believe in love at first sight?"

Lisa smirked at the question. She was warned that it was a serious question but she wasn't expecting something like that. "What kind of corny question is that, Jennie?"

"Tsk. Don't I look like I'm serious?"

"Are you sure you want me to answer that?"

"Just tell me, what's your point of view."

"Well, I can really say, you know," said Lisa, her eyes looking far away.

"But I believe it's possible for you to like a person right away the moment you met. And I think that's the concept of love at first sight; getting attracted to the person on your first meeting and eventually falling deeper along the way."

Jennie smile. "Have you felt that recently?"

"Love at first sight?"

"Yes?"

"To be honest, I'm not sure."

"Lisa..."

"Yeah?"

Jennie moved her head closer. Lisa slightly shivered when she felt Jennie's breath on her ear. Jennie covered her mouth with her right hand and then whispered, "You lost."

Lisa's jaw dropped, realizing that she's been tricked. "You got me there, huh?"

Jennie moved away with a lazy-teasing smile on her face, eyes almost disappearing. "Well, well, well..."

Although they might not have started on the right foot, what's happening now is a good thing. Lisa is thankful that she finally got the chance to talk to Jennie. She's hoping they'd be good friends too.

While the little lady is laughing and celebrating her victory, Lisa was already stating in awe at Jennie, completely drawn to the adorable smile on her face.

Lipstick

Another month had past and Lisa has finally able to fully adopt to the ways in the office. She's now acting as an Art Director and is being assigned to several clients. She's working with Rosé and Jennie once or twice a month, only if the client concerned is the one the ladies are handling. Jennie can see the warm treatment Rosé gives Lisa compared to the other art directors they've worked with.

After their little game last time, Jennie seemed to have waved off the barrier she's using when Lisa is around. She's now convinced that Lisa isn't flirty like what she thought. Lisa is just the type of person whose nature is to try to do good to everyone, even they've just met. This is the reason why the fan girls can't help but to fall for her even more.

It was another busy day in the office and Lisa is standing beside Jennie's terminal, looking frustrated.

"Oh, c'mon. Do you still have any other ideas?"

"I told you, it's the only one I could think of," said Jennie, pretending to be busy working on her computer.

Hearing the bickering from behind, Rosé decided to help. "Hey, hey, why are you two fighting again?"

Lisa shook the papers in her hands, "Well, Ms. Kim here says that the tagline she'd given for the lipstick product is fine. I think it's too lousy. I need another tagline now because I'll be submitting this to the client later."

"Why do we need to submit two samples if that one is okay?"

"That's the thing, Jennie, it's not okay. I can't submit this kind of result to the client."

"If you don't like the one I made then go create a tagline yourself."

Lisa walked over in front of the terminal to get a better view of Jennie's face. "We. Need. To. Talk," she said pointing a finger back and forth them.

Jennie isn't sure why, but she suddenly felt exposed. She can no longer concentrate on what she's doing. She slightly covered her face with a hand and said, "I told you, I ran out of ideas."

Rosé finally stood up. "Okay, maybe I can help. What's the product all about again?"

Lisa browsed the papers she's holding. "Well..."

Jennie saw this as a chance to look at Lisa. Although she hasn't fully accepted it to herself yet, she knows that Lisa has this charisma that somehow penetrates her. She observed how Lisa was browsing the papers.

I'd have to admit she's really cute in this angle.

While Jennie was busy checking out, Lisa took a glance at her in between scanning the papers. Jennie withdrew her eyes immediately.

Oh my gosh! Did she catch me looking at her? Will she think that I like her?

Before it gets more awkward for Jennie, Lisa pulled out a sheet of paper and showed it to Rosé. "Here. The product is a cherry-flavored edible lipstick. Jennie's article on it talks about the benefits it can give to woman, which I think is already obvious. The tagline she used is ---"

"Look and taste beautiful," said Jennie.

"See?" Lisa looked at Rosé with a sarcastic smile. "Who do you think is going to buy that tagline?"

Rosé laughed aloud for a moment and stopped when Jennie glared at her. "Oops, sorry."

"There has to be something better than this," said Lisa, flicking her fingers against the paper. "This is not my field. You should be the one doing this."

Rosé carefully touched Jennie's arm and forehead. "Seriously, girl? Do you have a problem? Are you feeling okay? It seems not like you producing something like that."

"I know. Sorry. Maybe it's just mood swings," said Jennie. At the back of her head she knew the real reason. She wasn't focused when she wrote the article because curious Lisa was watching her how to do it.

"It's okay. At least Lisa was able to notice the mistake before we submit it to the client," said Rosé, lightening up the mood. "I can provide my input too."

Lisa raised her right hand to get attention. "I actually have an idea to help you ladies. Let's conceptualize something that benefits not only women but also men.

"That's interesting. But how? Men don't wear lipstick," said Rosé.

"Yeah, probably they don't directly, but sometimes they do --- indirectly," said Lisa.

"How?" Jennie asked.

Lisa smiled. "C'mon, could you be more creative about it? Of course, it's done through a kiss."

"That's a good idea. I never thought of that," Rosé, who is always nothing to say negative about Lisa, agreed right away.

"Cool, yeah?"

"On the contrary, I'm not sure if that's a good idea," Jennie countered.

Lisa was confused again. "And why is that, Madame?"

"Well ---" Jennie paused for a moment to search for words because Lisa is looking at her again, "--- women are not gonna wear lipstick because they want to be kissed. The main reason is they want to feel beautiful."

"But it is cherry-flavored. Of course, men will love that sweet sensation while kissing." said Lisa.

Jennie didn't noticed that she raised an eyebrow while looking at Lisa. "So you are implying that lipsticks taste good while kissing?"

Lisa scratched her head. "Uh. I didn't mean it that way."

"Then why are you blushing?"

"It's because you're looking at me like a jealous girlfriend!" Lisa blurted out.

"I am not."

"You are."

"Not."

"Are."

"Okay, fine. I'm sorry if I looked at you like a jealous girlfriend," said Jennie plainly. "Poker face is my resting face. I hope you won't give it a different interpretation next time."

Lisa just chuckled. "Anyway, going back, the implication I want to express is women with lipsticks are hot and more seductive for men."

"You're so good, Lisa! I love that idea!" Rosé exclaimed. "What do you think, Jennie?"

"Yeah, but I still won't buy it. I won't wear lipstick because I just want to get kissed."

Lisa suddenly leaned over to Jennie, close enough until their faces are like five inches away. She gave Jennie the same smile that everyone in their office loves.

"I bet someone here doesn't have a boyfriend."

And Jennie was petrified for a second. She didn't notice that she held her breath after smelling Lisa's magical mouthwash. She turned her head away from the sight after her face felt warm.

Lisa pulled back this time. "Ooh, someone's blushing."

"I hate you. I hate you, Manoban," muttered Jennie, covering her face with her hands.

Rosé laughed. "It's because you caught her, Lisa."

"Caught her?"

"How did you know that she doesn't have a boyfriend?"

"Because... She sounded bitter....?" Lisa answered hesitantly. "For once, I thought Jennie and Kai were dating."

Rosé walked closer, putting her right elbow on Lisa's left shoulder.
"Unfortunately, Mr. Kim Jongin has been friendzoned by Ms. Jennie Kim."

Lisa smiled, thinking how poor Kai is. "Weren't there any other brave gentlemen here in the office who attempted to court our lady here?"

"I could name a few if you like. However, none of them were qualified. Sometimes I really wonder who could make Lady Kim say yes."

"Hmm.. that makes the two of us.." said Lisa, tapping her chin.

"Make men crave for more," Jennie uttered out of nowhere.

Rosé and Lisa looked at Jennie, both speechless.

"That's the tagline I thought of: Make men crave for more," Jennie reiterated.

"Wow, that's good!" said Rosé.

"That's cool, Jennie. I love it!" Lisa exclaimed. She was so happy that she grabbed the big alien stuffed toy and hugged it. "Finally, I can go home after finishing that."

"Hey, hey, hey. Why are you hugging Mrs. Lee?" said Jennie, standing up.

Lisa stopped jumping. "Huh?"

"My alien, give it back!"

"Oh, so her name is Mrs. Lee?"

"Yes."

Lisa looked at the stuffed toy and flipped it to look for any signs of feminism. "How did you know it's a female?"

"Are you dumb? She has eyelashes."

"Oh?" Lisa looked at the face of the alien and smiled. "Yeah, eyelashes."

"Give it back."

"Why did you name it Mrs. Lee? Where is her husband?" Lisa scanned the other stuffed toys on the table.

Jennie frowned like a child. "I wasn't able to find a pair for it. It's always out of stock. I'm still looking for a male version but I can't find it anywhere."

"Oooh, poor Mrs. Lee. She doesn't have a love life... Like her owner..."

"What did you say?!"

"Aaaaahhh! Amazon attack!"

"You --- silly, Manoban!"

Lisa runaway while hugging Mrs. Lee. Jennie chased her. It's almost 6 pm that time and they were the only ones left in the office. They have the entire floor as their track.

After a few rounds of running around, they stopped.

"Hey, I'm tired..." Lisa was gasping for air. "I didn't know you were a fast runner..."

Jennie was also exhausted. "Just give me back my alien... Now..."

"Okay." Lisa raised the alien. "Hey, I'm giving you back to your owner. You're so cute and fluffy.. unlike her..."

Jennie just rolled her eyes. She saw Lisa kissed the nose of Mrs. Lee. "Hey! Why did you kisse it?"

"It's so cute, and it smells good!" said Lisa, handing back the alien. "Bye, Jennie. Bye, Mrs. Lee. I'll see you both tomorrow." She ran back to her department.

Jennie walked back to her terminal, still hugging the stuffed-toy. She sat down slowly and stared emptily at her computer monitor.

Rosé stood up and go to the restroom. When Jennie was sure she was alone, she looked at Mrs. Lee again.

You surely had a good day, didn't you?

She held the stuffed-toy as if she was petting a dog. She stared at it again for a moment, kissed it and smiled as she hugs it.

I hate you, Lisa. You made Jennie crave for more.

Plan

"Kai."

Kai saw a chat notification from Rosé. He quickly typed in his reply.

"Hey, what's up?"

"Any visitors today?"

Kai chuckled. Rosé is checking on Lisa like a private investigator.

"Yeah, every day. Today was someone from the HR. She says she just wanted to ask about some of Lisa's requirements. I doubt it."

"Is there anyone that Lisa seemed to have shown any interest yet?"

"As far as I can see, none."

"That's good! 😊"

Kai wasn't interested in replying again until he saw another message from Rosé.

"Hey, do you really like Jennie?"

"Of course, I do. Why?"

"Well, I have this proposal."

"Is this something good?"

"Of course, silly. This will benefit both of us 😊."

"Tell me more about it 😊."

"The plan is I'll help you with Jennie while you help me with Lisa."

"That sounds fair. When do we start?"

"Tonight."

It was the end of the day. Kai saw Lisa already preparing her stuff so he approached her, "Hey, going home now?"

"Almost. Just sending a few more emails to clients."

He comfortably sat at Lisa's table. "You seem to be in a hurry, you have plans for later?"

Lisa thought about it first before shaking her head. "None of top of my head now. Why?"

"It's just that I noticed that you've been here for more than four months now but haven't hung out with anyone yet."

Lisa bit her lip when she realized the same thing. "Now that you mention it, yeah, you're right. I didn't notice that myself."

"So, do you wanna go with us later?"

"With whom?"

"Jennie and Rosé invited us to go out. You know, it's Friday and weekend is approaching. We might want to unwind for a bit." said Kai convincingly. He tapped Lisa's shoulder. "Plus, they want to celebrate the approval of the lipstick ad. You and Jennie did a great job on that."

Lisa was planning to turn down the offer until a certain name was mentioned. "Is it just gonna be just the four of us? With Jennie and Rosé?"

"Yeah, yeah. The girls were actually expecting you'd come."

Lisa's face lit up. "I guess, that sounds like a good plan."

"Cool."

"Hey, do you want to hang out later?" Rosé asked Jennie this time.

Jennie, who's never really fan of going out, immediately shook her head.

"Nah, I just wanted to rest tonight. It was a stressful week."

"It's not everyday that I get to go out with you," said Rosé, pouting. She got to pull this one off because Kai already confirmed that Lisa is coming.

"But we're together every day. You see, we even sit across each other."

Rosé sighed, feeling more hopeless now. "Just this one, Jen, c'mon..."

Jennie shook her head no. "You can't change my mind. I'm really tired."

"That's sad. Kai and Lisa were expecting you to come."

Of all the people, Jennie never expected that Lisa will be joining them. "T-they are coming with us?"

"Yeah, just the four of us. They thought we should be celebrating the approval of your project with Lisa."

Jennie stared at Rosé for a moment, as if contemplating. Then she went back to arranging something on her table. "Are you sure that it's just the four of us?"

"Yeah, do you want to bring someone else?"

"No, no..."

Rosé grinned. "Does that mean you're coming?"

"Fine, but I don't want to get drunk, okay?"

"Oh, you won't be."

The four of them met in the hallway near the lift area.

"There you are guys!" Rosé exclaimed upon seeing Lisa and Kai. She looped her arms through Lisa and looked at Kai. "Where are we going, mister?"

Jennie and Lisa were silent like they both felt awkward. Lisa gave a small smile. Jennie returned it but turned away immediately when their eyes met.

"I have this place in mind right now. However, we might want to take a cab. My car's busted," said Kai, scratching his head.

"I could drive all of us there if you want." said Lisa.

"Wow, you have a car?" asked Rosé.

"Mmm-mmm."

"That's good. Shall we?" Kai pressed the elevator bottom.

Kai brought them to a place called "BarChu". It's one of the most famous bars in town as it offers a restaurant, a bar, and a dance party.

The first and second floors were designated for the "eaters-only". The basement is the place to be for the "dancers".

Kai, Lisa, Rosé and Jennie arrived there and went to the third floor for the nice city view. Lisa is sitting beside Rosé and in front of Kai. Kai is beside Jennie. They ordered food and started digging after it was served.

They are having casual talks while eating. It was halfway through the meal when Lisa noticed that Jennie isn't really interacting with them. She observed the petite lady, thinking that maybe Jennie doesn't really want to invite her here tonight, only Rosé and Kai.

"Why are you looking at me like that?" Jennie paused after she felt that Lisa was staring at her.

Lisa wanted to smack herself for not realizing what she was doing. "I was just wondering if you're okay. You don't look like you're enjoying yourself."

Jennie stared at Lisa. She can easily do it this time because the place is dimmed. Deep inside she knows what Lisa is talking about. She is not in her best mood, probably because of a certain person named Rosé.

Ever since they went out that night, Rosé keeps on clinging to Lisa on every single chances she gets. Sometimes she does this obvious flirty act like hitting Lisa in the arm, or shoulder, whenever Lisa jokes; or touching Lisa's hair like she's fixing it. It's just too obvious and Lisa doesn't seem to mind.

"Are you alright, Jennie?" asked Kai, scooting closer.

Lisa raised an eyebrow. She knows Kai is making a move now.

Jennie gave Kai a sweet smile. "I'm okay, don't worry. It's just that the stress from work has taken its toll on me."

Lisa noticed how Kai got stunned by the same smile that she loves.

"It's okay. That's why we're here, we need to unwind. Just forget about the office work for now. Let's enjoy the night." said Kai, bringing his hands to Jennie's shoulder to massaged it.

Lisa shook her head and smiled secretly.

"I will. Thanks for taking me out tonight," said Jennie, still smiling sweetly.

"No worries. My pleasure." Kai removed his hands right away.

"What the fuck, Lisa, is that you?"

Hearing the voice, Lisa turned around and stood up at the sight of a familiar person. "Jisoo!"

"Oh, my goodness! You're back from the dead, Lis!"

The two exchanged quick hugs. Jisoo pulled away first. "How are you, dude? I haven't seen you in a long time!"

"I've been busy with studied last year. After graduation, I started working right away."

"Really? Why you didn't tell me? Why did you visit just now?"

"Too busy. I just had some night out with my co-workers. Come here." Lisa led Jisoo to their table. "Guys, it is with great honor and pleasure that I introduce to you the owner of this bar, Jisoo, my friend."

Jennie couldn't help but raised an eyebrow.

Jisoo? Another lesbian? Of course, they are friends. This one looks girlier, though. She's pretty but Lisa is more beautiful and charming.

"T-the owner of this bar?" asked Kai slowly.

Jisoo nodded. "Don't be surprised, in case you guys didn't know," she put her arms around Lisa's neck and messed her hair, "This kiddo here is a richer brat."

Lisa fought until Jisoo let her go. "Stop it. You're messing my hair, dude."

"By the way, I'm Kai."

"Hello." Jisoo shook his hand. Her eyes shifted to the lady beside Kai and smiled like she's asking the name of the petite girl.

"Jennie." Jennie smiled wildly and stretched her hand for a shake.

Jisoo bowed. "Nice to meet you Ms. Jennie."

Rosé stood up and stretched her right arm out too. "Hi, Jisoo, I'm Rosé." Her eyes flickered like she just saw a goddess.

Jisoo held Rosé's hand and kissed it. "It's my pleasure to meet you, my lady."

Oh my, Rosé, you are hopeless.

Jennie rolled her eyes. She's not mad at her best friend. It's just that there are times she gets irritated to Rosé's eagerness to find true love. The fact that she easily falls someone, and loves flirting a lot, doesn't really help her in finding the right person.

"I hope you guys are enjoying your stay here." said Jisoo formally, rubbing her palms together. "If there's anything I can help you with, let me know. I can be your personal host for tonight."

"Do you have special drink you could offer us?" Rosé's turned to flirt mode again.

"I could offer you our specialty house drink," said Jisoo, side glancing Lisa.

"Yeah, I'll tell you guys, it's the best." Lisa raised her two thumbs up.

"But if all of you are driving home, I won't tolerate you drinking." Jisoo warned.

"It's fine, give it to them. I'm driving them home," said Lisa.

"Dude, the last time you said that, I remember receiving a call from a crying Irene, telling me you're in a hospital."

Lisa laughed at the memory. "No, it's different this time. I won't drink. I promise. I just want them to experience it."

"What's so special about it Lisa?" asked Rosé.

Jisoo spoke on behalf of Lisa, "It's a chocolate flavored liquor. It's sweet like you're drinking a chocolate drink, with menthol catch, but it can get you drunk easily."

"Ooh, sounds inviting." Rosé winked at Jisoo.

"I'd love to have that but I don't think Jennie wants to have a drinking session tonight," said Kai, placing an arm around Jennie's shoulder.

Lisa felt uncomfortable, so she pretends not to look at Jennie and Kai.

"It's okay. Just let me know if you need anything else." Jisoo showed them her beautiful smile.

"Thanks, Jisoo," said Kai.

Jisoo turned to Lisa again and whispered, "Hey, how's you and Irene?"

After hearing it twice, that name caught Jennie's attention. She tried to listen to what they are talking about but Jisoo's voice lowered. And what's worst, Lisa's reaction is tickling her curiosity more.

Irene? Who's Irene? A girlfriend?

"I... I haven't heard from her since she left last year..." said Lisa.

"Dude, I met her last week, here."

"Really?"

"It's her, believe me. I'm not sure when she came back. Don't tell me she hasn't contacted you yet?"

Lisa bit her lower lip and shook her head.

Jisoo scratched her chin. "Well... I don't know what's on her mind."

Lisa sighed in response.

"In that case, let me know any news about you, okay?"

"Yeah, thanks, Chu." Lisa tapped her friend on the arm.

"I'll have to attend another guests, excuse me for now." Jisoo left them.

Jennie saw Lisa standing for a while, staring at nothing. After few more seconds, she turned to them and sat back on the couch.

"C'mon, let's finish the food before it runs out from our plates," Lisa joshed.

"Hey, why you didn't tell us that you knew the owner of this bar?" asked Kai, still surprised.

Lisa sipped on her soda first before saying, "I didn't think we'd bump into each other tonight. That person is too busy to pee."

"So, you used to go here often?" asked Jennie.

"Yeah, before, years ago, with some friends."

Jennie just nodded. *Friends huh?*

"About the choco drink, I really think you guys should have it. Don't worry. I won't drink tonight so I could drive us all home safely," said Lisa.

"Yeah, I'm curious about that too. If Jennie doesn't want to drink then we will just order for Kai and me," said Rosé, wrapping her arms around Lisa's waist.

"Good idea. We shouldn't let Lisa drink. Nobody wants to wake up in the hospital tomorrow," Kai joked and everyone laughed.

"Jennie, do you prefer soda? Or I can get you iced-tea if you want," Lisa asked her.

While thinking about it. Jennie saw Rosé's face move closer against Lisa's ear. She covered her mouth with her left hand and whispered something, making Lisa grin. But it didn't stop there, Jennie noticed Rosé's jaw still moving, meaning she's whispering more things to Lisa. After few more seconds, both laughed.

Jennie clenched both her fists on the table. "Let's all have that choco drink!"

Drunk

"Guys... I said... I can walk on my own... No need to carry me... Let go of me... Now...! Jennie commanded. Lisa and Kai were assisting her to walk, her arms draped around their shoulders.

As what Jisoo has told them, the drink tasted like an ice-cold chocolate drink. Everyone enjoyed it, especially Jennie who kept on filling her glass as if she was not aware that it's a mixture of alcohol and other stuff. After an hour she became talkative which lead them to think that she's drunk and decided to take her home.

Rosé, on the other hand, was having a good time with the bar owner. Jisoo volunteered to drive the lady home later by herself.

"Yeah, you could walk on your own," said Lisa, trying her best to carry Jennie, "but you keep stumbling, you know?"

"It's because... It's because... I can't feel my legs.."

Lisa adjusted Jennie's arms on her shoulder. "If you were feeling something strange about your legs earlier then why did you drink a lot?"

Jennie tilted her head to Lisa and drew her face closer before smiling.

"Because.... it tastes... sooooo.... goooood..."

Lisa heaved a sigh. Even so, she can't help but wonder how Jennie can still be so cute even when drunk. She might not have admitted it before but she's getting fond of this little girl day by day.

"Lisa.." said Kai. He's tipsy but is not as drunk as Jennie. "How far more is it..? I... I don't remember where we.. parked the car..."

"We're close, Kai. We're now in the parking lot."

"Oh, good. My house is.. is just around the corner. You'd have to drop me off first.. then you make sure.. to.. drop Jennie in her house, okay..?"

"Yeah, I'll do that."

"Thanks, man."

Lisa smiled to herself. This is the first time she had gotten out for a drink after a year of abstinence. It's undeniable that her source of joy that night is the wasted lady they are carrying now. It just pleases her to know more things about Jennie. It makes her feel closer to her. She volunteered to drive them home because she doesn't want to leave Jennie alone with Kai.

Jennie keeps talking about random stuff while they walk to the parking lot. Upon reaching the car, they assisted her in the back seat. Kai sat beside Lisa in front. They drove immediately and reached Kai's home first.

Jennie looked at the window when she felt the car stopped. She squinted her eyes, observing the house in front of her. "So.. this is.. your place...?"

"Yes, Jennie." said Kai, getting out of the car.

Jennie frowned and pouted her lips. "It doesn't look like a happy house to me..."

Lisa and Kai laughed. "Let her be. She's drunk," said Lisa, looking at the passenger behind.

Kai placed his hands on the rolled down car window. "Thanks, Lisa. I'm too dizzy right now. I should be the one accompanying her home."

"No worries. I enjoyed tonight by the way."

"Me too. I'll see you on Monday. Just ask Jennie where her address is, okay?" Kai pulled himself backward and waved goodbye.

"Will do, sir!" Lisa gestured a salute and stepped on the accelerator.

Her familiar car looks like a different world now. Jennie is on the back seat and Lisa feels like her night had just started. She can see Jennie from the rear-view mirror looking out the window.

"Jennie...?"

Jennie turned her attention to the caller and leaned forward to rest an arm against the back of the seat. "Yes, honey?"

Lisa tried to hide her smile, afraid that Jennie will notice it. "A-are you okay?"

Jennie moved in closer, almost leaning her chin on Lisa's shoulder. "Never been better! Just glad that the entire nuisance had disappeared now."

Lisa doesn't have any idea what nuisance Jennie is talking about. "Could you tell me where your address is?"

"And why are you asking?"

"I'm driving you home so you could rest now."

"I don't want to go home yet, honey."

Lisa can't control herself blushing this time after hearing the endearment twice. "Where do you want to go then?"

"I don't know..." Jennie reclined in the back seat, her hair covering her face. "Let's just stay like this for now."

When they reached the highway, Lisa called Jennie but the latter isn't answering anymore. Lisa saw her passenger already lying down at the back. She had to stop to check if Jennie is still breathing.

Lisa opened the back door and tugged Jennie's sleeve. "Hey, kitten, wake up..."

"Mmmm..."

"Could you tell me where you live so I could take you there?"

Jennie didn't answer.

"Jennie, c'mon..."

Silence.

Lisa glanced at her wristwatch.

Oh boy. I guess she's asleep. It's already 1:30 am and I'm tired.

She blew air from her mouth and scratched her head. She went back to the driver's seat and put on her seat belt.

Fine, I'm taking you to my place.

She tried to wake up Jennie again when they arrived at the building parking lot. The latter didn't even move. Lisa had no choice but to carry the drunken passenger up.

Jeez. She's heavier than she looks!

Good thing it's almost 2:00 am and there were no people around that time except for the security guards. She piggy backed Jennie from the parking lot, to the elevator, to her room.

"Home sweet home," she murmured upon entering the room.

Lisa went directly to the bedroom. She sat on the bed and gently disentangled the arms around her neck. Jennie fell like a lifeless body on the bed.

"Honey..." Jennie mumbled. "Where... are... we...?"

Lisa turned to check on Jennie. She can't help but smile on how the girl calls her. She laid on her side, head on her hand.

You're so beautiful.

"We're in my apartment, Jen. You're not telling me your address. I don't know where else to go."

Jennie moved, turning her whole body to face Lisa. Her face covered by her hair, "Could you.. buy me.. a ramen tomorrow?"

Ramen? She's really weird even drunk.

"Yeah, I can do that."

"I've been.. thinking of eating ramen for.. a week now. I'm craving.. for it.."

Lisa smiled to herself. Drunken or not, Jennie is still adorable. They were silent for a while Lisa enjoys staring at Jennie. "Are you asleep?"

"No..."

"How are you feeling now?"

"Head.. ache.."

"Can you feel your legs yet?"

Jennie shook her head.

Although Lisa can't see Jennie's eyes because of her hair, she knows that her eyes are closed.

"Lisa..."

"Yes?"

"Do you.. like Ros  ..?"

It was a question out of the blue. "Well, she's fun to be with, so.. yeah... I like her."

Jennie didn't say anything nor move after that. Lisa is starting to wonder if Jennie is even aware of what she's saying now.

"Do you like her.. more than me...?" Jennie asked again.

Lisa felt a little awkward about it. "Err... I like her in a way because she's so kind to me. But you, I like you even though you're not kind to me."

"So.. which of us do you.. really like..? Me.. or.. Rosé...?"

Lisa doesn't know what that question meant. She cannot control herself anymore. Her right hand wandered on Jennie's face, brushing the latter's hair behind her ears.

"I like you more, Jennie."

I like you a lot.

Jennie's exposed face now revealed her closed eyes. It's like she's just sleep-talking. "But you know Lisa... I'm not.. like Rosé..."

"In what way?"

"I... I.. won't fall for you..."

Lisa's hands clenched. All her excitement drained. "I... I know that..."

"But... I do want to keep you as a friend."

Lisa didn't speak. *A friend? Yeah.*

"Lisa?"

"Mmm?"

"Could you.. please.. stay by my side.. always...?"

Lisa moved back to face the ceiling.

"I will, Jen. I will."

Visitor

It's already three in the morning and Lisa's consciousness is still at it's peak. She's currently lying on the couch while Jennie is occupying her bedroom. Her mind can't seem to forget what Jennie had told her earlier.

She can't fall for me? What does she mean by that? She can't as in 'cannot' or she 'doesn't' want to fall for me? Aargggh! But she wants me to be her friend. What for? Maybe she's not really into this kind of thing.

Slowly, her deep thoughts brought her to sleep.

Jennie woke up seeing the beam of morning light from the window. She stretched her arms out and looked around. She got up immediately upon realizing that she's in unfamiliar bedroom.

Where am I?

She brought her hand to her hair after a terrible ache surged. She tries recalling what happened.

Kai, Rosé, Lisa and I went out last night. Rosé and Lisa were so sweet. Then we met Jisoo, Lisa's friend, and the owner of the bar. She offered us their special house drink. It taste so good. I had a few shots. I felt my legs getting numb. I remember I was being carried by Lisa and Kai to the parking lot. What happened after that?

Jennie scanned the room. She saw a table alarm clock on the bedside table.

Shit, it's 10:00 am! I need to call mom. She's going to be mad!

She found her purse nearby and fished for her mobile phone. She frowned because her battery is empty.

Tsk. I'm in big trouble.

She stood up from the bed and wandered around the room, wanting to find out whose house she's in right now. She saw a picture frame on the table near the window. It's Lisa's graduation picture with an older man beside her, probably her dad.

Oh. So, this is Lisa's place.

Her eyes widened.

Wait, I'm in Lisa's place!

She panicked. She can't contain the idea that Lisa saw her in that kind of situation. She's more embarrassed with the idea that Lisa will see her now in her haggard appearance. And what's worst is she can't remember a thing from last night. What if she'd done something that she wasn't supposed to do?

Wait, did we.. oh, c'mon, Jennie! What are you thinking?

She slapped herself.

But I'm alone in bed, and these are my clothes from yesterday. Where is she?

She went out of the room and found Lisa on the couch, her whole body covered with a blanket. Jennie bent a little to take a closer look at Lisa's face.

Ooh, the kid is still sleeping.

She touched Lisa's nose with a fingertip. Lisa didn't move. Jennie smiled.

Silly me. What am I doing?

She stared at Lisa and noticed something.

Lisa is standing near an abyss.

She looked around to check if anyone was with her. There's none. She felt alone. She always feels alone. Ever since her mom died her father drowned himself to work just to cope up with his grieving. For a little child of her age, Lisa didn't know the process to move on.

Then she saw Irene standing on the edge of the other cliff in front of her. She wanted to get there but there's no bridge anywhere. The cliff is too high, and she will die if she falls in the river below.

"Irene!" she called out.

Irene didn't turn.

"IRENE!"

Irene didn't seem to hear her.

She took few steps back and strode forward, running fast. Upon reaching the edge of the cliff, Lisa jumped as high as she could. She thought she's going to make it -- she was sure she could -- but due to unknown elements, while in the air, she saw the gap of the cliffs became wider, making her land on both hands holding onto the the edge of the other cliff.

"Irene! Help me!" She looked down and saw the wild current of water.

She tried to rest her right foot on a stone bump but it cracked and fell immediately. She looked up and saw Irene staring down at her.

"Irene, help me. I don't wanna fall!"

"Lisa."

She heard a voice. She was sure it wasn't Irene's. She didn't even saw Irene's lips move. She looked around and there's no one else but them. She looked up again.

"Irene, please? Don't let me down again."

"Lisa!"

The voice is louder this time. She felt her world shaking and everything is falling into the abyss. Her left hand slipped it's grip from the stone. She's now hanging with one hand.

The quake intensity increased. Little by little the cliff's edge cracked and she fell, having the last glimpse of Irene looking down at her.

"IRENE!" Lisa cried out, getting up from the couch.

Jennie didn't move for a second. Lisa's face is leveling hers, eyes locked into hers. Her mind is full of unexplainable feelings towards this Irene girl that she's heard for the third time now.

Lisa looked down, gasping for air. She's sweating.

"Lisa?" Jennie tugged Lisa's sleeve. "Are you okay?"

Lisa slowly nodded. She covered her chin and mouth with a hand and looked away.

"You're... You're having a nightmare... I had to wake you up.."

"Yeah... Sorry about that. Thanks, Jennie."

"Are you sure you're okay now?"

"Mmm-mmm. Don't worry. I'm fine."

"Okay." Jennie felt at ease this time. She moved away and sat on the other end of the sofa. "By the way can I use your phone? I need to call my mom. My battery's empty. I'm pretty sure she's already worried about me."

Lisa removed the blanket from her body and stood up from the couch.

"Sure. Go ahead," she said, pointing at the phone on the table. "Just do your thing. I'll just wash my face."

"Okay. Thanks."

That surely was a weird dream.

Lisa stared at her reflection in the mirror, making sure she looks refreshed now.

She went out from the bathroom and heard Jennie talking to her mom on the phone.

"Sorry, mom, my battery's drained so I wasn't able to call you right away." Jennie became silent while listening to the person on the other line. "Yeah, I'm with a female friend right now. I'll be home in a few hours." Silence again. "I love you too, mom. Bye."

Lisa smiled at the term "female friend". Well, technically, she's still a female.

Jennie put back the phone on the table. When she turned around she saw Lisa wiping feet on the rug. She felt glad seeing the latter looking better this time.

" 'sup?" Lisa wagged her eyebrows.

Jennie smiled after seeing Lisa's aura changed back to normal. "Can you tell me how I end up here in your place?"

Lisa threw the towel on her right shoulder as she walked to sit on the couch. "You passed out on me, Jen."

Jennie sat on the couch adjacent to Lisa's. "Sorry about that..."

"I don't know where you live. After driving Kai home, I don't know where else to go."

"How did we make it up here?"

"I carried you on my back," said Lisa, tapping the back of her shoulder.

"Ow..." Jennie, who looks embarrassed, placed her fingers on her lips.

"You're heavier than I thought," said Lisa, letting out a soft laugh. This made Jennie throw a pillow at her which she dodged immediately. "Do you remember anything from last night?"

"Just hazy memories..."

"Do you remember getting here in my room?"

"No, not that part."

"Oh, I see..."

"Did something..."

"Huh?"

"Lisa, did we..." Jennie scrunched up her face and waved her hand like there is more to say that she cannot say.

Lisa didn't get it at first. She gazed at Jennie for few more seconds, wondering what the girl wanted to tell her.

"Did something..." Jennie trailed off, still hesitating, "...you know.. you and me..."

Lisa's jaw dropped when she deciphered the message. She knew she got it right when Jennie's face blushed.

"No! NO! No, Jen! None of that!"

Both looked away from each other after feeling embarrassed with the idea. Lisa looked out the window and Jennie looked somewhere else while scratching her head.

There were few seconds of silence until Lisa decided to break it, "Uhm, Jen? I'm going out for a while to buy something. Would you like to take a shower and refresh yourself before I drive you home?"

"Love to, but..." Jennie smelled her blouse and pursed her lips after. "Do you mind lending me a blouse or a shirt? I'd like to change my top, it's stinky."

"Feel free to check my closet. Grab anything you like." Lisa pointed at her closet.

Jennie looked at the same direction and went back to Lisa. "Thanks."

Lisa pointed at the bathroom this time. "There's an extra disposable toothbrush in the bathroom, you can use it."

"Perfect."

Extra disposable toothbrush, huh? I wonder how many woman had she brought her already?

Jennie finished bathing and now is skeptically staring at the toothbrush in her hand. She noticed the mouthwash beside the toothpaste.

Okay, so this is the magical mouthwash.

After brushing and testing out Lisa's mouthwash, Jennie went out of the bathroom with the towel wrapped around her body. Lisa said she'll be out for about an hour, enough time for Jennie to finish fixing herself. She opened Lisa's closet and run through the clothes. She chose the white button-down shirt to wear.

While drying her hair in front of the mirror, she noticed a reflection of a room at the back. Out of curiosity, she walked there to check. She turned on the lights and her eyed widened.

Oh. My. Gosh.

Jennie was simply amazed. The room is filled with different pictures of people, some framed and some are not. Almost all variations are there; men, women, children, elder, babies, black, white, Asian, Causcausian, and a whole lot more.

And what's making it special is all those people were captured smiling naturally.

As her eyes roam through the room, one specific picture caught her attention. It is the biggest frame hanged in the center of the room. It is a portrait of a woman who's wearing a white satin dress, or lingerie probably, Jennie isn't sure herself. She smiled when she felt the positive aura of the image in front of her.

Her smile is genuine. She's beautiful. Did Lisa take this photo?

Jennie's smile faded.

And it's on her bed.

Jennie heard the knob being unlocked. She ran out of the room immediately and saw Lisa just got in.

"Hey," Jennie greeted with her hands on her back.

"Hello ---"

Lisa couldn't continue what she was about to say. Jennie is standing in front of her, completely freshened up from the bath. Her brunette hair is still messy, yet it looks perfect on her. Jennie is still wearing the denim shorts from yesterday but for whatever reason Lisa's shirt looks good on her.

Lisa was so mesmerized right now that she can't even find the right words to describe what she's feeling. Her shirt is obviously bigger but she wonders how Jennie managed to still look perfect in it.

Jennie sensed that Lisa is looking at the blouse she's wearing. "Um.. do you mind if I use this one?"

"No, no... You look gorgeous in it," Lisa remarked, walking towards the table to hide her blushing face.

Jennie bit her lip, feeling shy about the compliment.

"Come here, Jen, let's eat. I got us a ramen."

Jennie squealed with joy upon hearing it. She went to the table immediately. "Really? You brought ramen?"

Lisa smiled at Jennie, nodding. "It's an authentic ramen."

"Wow! I've been craving for this since last week!"

Lisa sat down in front of Jennie. "Yeah, that's what you told me last night."

"I did?"

"Mmm. You specifically requested me to buy you a ramen." Lisa squinted her eyes and puckered her lips out and said, "'Could you.. buy me.. a ramen tomorrow?' " She mimicked Jennie's tone from last night.

"Eeeeeiiii! I hate you!" Jennie hit Lisa's arm.

"Hehe, you're so cute when you're drunk. Do you know that?"

Jennie wasn't prepared for that.

"Do you remember anything else you said last night?" asked Lisa.

"Like what?"

"You said Kai's house doesn't look like a happy house."

Jennie's jaw dropped. "I SAID THAT?!"

"YES." Lisa laughed hard. She squinted her eyes again and pouted her lips before mimicking Jennie's tone, "It doesn't seem to look like a happy house to me..."

"Uuuuugggghhh! I hate you, Manoban!" Jennie covered her face. "This is embarrassing.

You even called me honey thrice, Lisa thought, smiling to herself.

"What are you smiling at?"

"Nothing... C'mon, let's eat..." ...*Honey*.

After a while, a sound from the door caught Lisa's attention. Someone was trying to unlock it. It's too late before she was able to consider doing anything about it because the door flew open, revealing the image behind it.

Lisa stood up from the chair, her eyes bulging.

Seeing Lisa's reaction, Jennie trailed the latter's line of sight and noticed a person standing by the door.

Who is she? Wait, she looks familiar. No way! She's the girl in the ---

"Hi there, Lali. Long time no see."

Past

"Hi there, Lali. Long time no see."

Lisa was speechless, both surprised and confused. She's not sure what to feel. Her mind is torn between the idea wanting to see Irene and spending the day with Jennie.

Of all the time, Irene, why now?

Irene noticed Lisa's uneasiness. She then has a glimpse of another person sitting at the table.

"Oh. I didn't know you have a visitor."

Lisa glanced at Jennie for a second. Their eyes met but Lisa turned her eyes back to Irene.

"Oh, Lisa, what's wrong with you today?" Irene walked towards Lisa and tapped her shoulder. "Speak up and introduce us."

Lisa, who realized that she should have done that earlier, straightened up her shirt and turned to Jennie slowly. "Um..."

"Ugh! What's wrong with you?" Impatient Irene walked towards Jennie and offered her right hand. "Hi, I'm Irene, Lisa's friend," she said, wearing the same smile she had in the picture. "Please forgive her for being such an asshole today."

Jennie can't believe how beautiful Irene is in the flesh. She rose up to shake Irene's hand with a smile plastered on her face too. "Jennie. Lisa's friend too."

Lisa felt her neck inching.

Oh boy, this is awkward.

"Nice meeting you, Jennie." After the handshake, Irene immediately scanned the woman in front of her. Her eyes twitched when she saw what Jennie was wearing.

Lisa brought her palm to her face when she realized where Irene was looking at.

Oh, shit. That was the shirt we bought for my birthday last year.

"O-kay..." Irene pressed her lips together and turned around. "I guess I better go now, Lis."

"But Joo-Hyun ---"

"Let's just do this some other time," said Irene, walking towards the door.

"When will I see you again?"

Irene brushed a hand through her hair before turning to Lisa. "Some other time, when we're both not busy."

Lisa breathed out her disappointment. She knows that "some other time" could take longer.

As if knowing what's on Lisa's mind Irene stopped by the door and said, "Don't worry. I won't go anywhere this time. I promise we'll talk sooner. We need to talk. Be hospitable to your guest first, okay?"

Lisa turned her head to Jennie, who gave her a lame smile when their eyes met.

Irene didn't wait for another second. "It's nice to meet you, Jennie. And Lisa, I'll see you soon. Bye." She waved goodbye and shut the door close.

The latch of the door was then followed by a long deafening silence. Lisa clenched her hands into fists, unsure of how to solve her dilemma.

What should I do? Should I follow her? But I just can't leave Jennie here. But what if I don't get the chance to talk to Irene again? Agh! This is crazy!

"Lisa..."

Lisa turned to Jennie. "Y-yes?"

"I.. uh.. I think you should ---"

"I... I should follow her.. yeah." Lisa knew what Jennie was about to say. She walked to the door and halted before opening it. "Just promise me you won't leave, okay?"

"I won't."

After the assurance, Lisa ran out of the room.

Jennie bit her lip and sat on the chair. After getting the feeling of being closer this time, why does she feel Lisa being far away again?

"Hyuuuun!"

Lisa hurried to the hallway and found Irene standing in front of the elevator.

Irene was obviously shocked first but managed to make a smile upon seeing Lisa. "And why are you here?" She watched the latter walked towards her, still frowning. "Hey, what's with the face?"

"I... I don't know. Maybe I'm just afraid I might not see you again," said Lisa, worried.

"Oh, Lali..."

"I've waited for you, Hyun, for over a year."

"I'm sorry. I know my appearance is past late than what I've promise. But I didn't ask you to wait for me."

"I know. I just..." Lisa's eyes darted around while trying to find the right words to say. "I've been waiting for this day. There's so much to tell you."

Irene held Lisa's face. "Let's do this some other time, okay?"

"Just promise me we'll see each other again after this."

"Of course. Like I said, I still want to talk to you. And forgive me for barging into your apartment like that."

"It's okay. You always do that before, right?"

"But it's different this time. I might have offended your girlfriend."

Lisa raised her eyebrows. "Huh? S-she's not my girlfriend, Hyun."

Irene ran her fingers through her hair. "Oh, c'mon, Lisa."

"No.. really.. she's not my girlfriend."

Irene didn't look convinced. "Aside from the obvious fact that she did sleep in your room, bathe in your bathroom and is wearing your shirt, let's pretend I believe you, okay?" Lisa, you can't just leave her there. Go back now and entertain your *visitor*.

"But Hyuuuun."

"Why don't you just admit it? Don't worry about me. I'm not jealous. I already have a boyfriend."

Lisa felt something blocking in her throat. "Y-you have a boyfriend?"

"Yeah. I met him in Singapore. We came back here together two weeks ago."

"Oh..."

"Alright? Now go back there now before somebody gets mad at you," said Irene, pushing Lisa around to go back to her room.

"So, when will I see you again?"

"I'll just visit you again. My schedule is tight right now. I can't promise a specific time." Irene pressed the elevator button.

Lisa didn't say anything until the lift door opened.

Irene leaned forward to give a peck on Lisa's cheek. She stepped into the elevator. "Bye for now, Lisa. Don't make her cry, okay?"

Lisa smiled as the door closed.

When she came back to her room, Lisa was relieved to see Jennie still at the same spot where she was situated earlier, already done with her ramen.

"Did I mess up something?" asked Jennie, worried. She knows that whoever that woman is, she's surely playing a major role in Lisa's life. The image of Lisa getting distracted won't leave her mind.

Lisa shook her head as she sat down. "No...."

"I was worried, you know. I thought your girlfriend will be mad at you."

Lisa chuckled and scratched her head. *What? Girlfriend again?*

"Why are you laughing?"

"Well, the funny thing is also thought that you are my..." she hesitated to say the last word. "... you know..."

"Oh..." Jennie unconsciously placed her right hand on her lip.

"She's not my girlfriend, Jennie."

"Does she really think I'm your girlfriend?"

"Y-yeah..." Lisa felt bashful with the term. The last three words Jennie said sounded like music in her ears. "Sorry about that."

Jennie narrowed her eyes. "I'm just.. curious..."

"About?"

"If she thinks of me as your girlfriend then why did she leave a kiss mark on your cheek?"

Lisa's jaw fell. Her initial reaction was to cover her cheeks with her palms. "She did?"

"The mark is too obvious, Lisa," said Jennie, pointing at it. "She really wants me to see it." She helped Lisa removed the mark with a tissue.

"Aish. Joo-hyun is always like that. She loves to tease me."

"Obviously, she's planning on teasing me too. Is she an ex?"

"N-no.."

"Relative?"

Lisa shook her head, smiling.

"Well, you just seemed close to each other. She even has the key to your door." Jennie was not sure if she should still point that out, but she had to. Her curiosity is burning inside her.

"Yeah.. well.. honestly, Irene and I had this something complicated before, Jen."

"Complicated like?"

"Uh.. you know... I'm not sure if you'll understand," said Lisa.

I'm not even sure if you're interested.

"I'm sure I can follow," said Jennie, tucking up both her legs on the chair.

"I'm just not sure if.. if you're interested in talking about this kind of thing." Lisa remembered clearly what Jennie has told her last night. Maybe she's not really into this type of relationship.

"I'm sure I can keep up if you're willing to tell me," said Jennie, still pushing it. Truth is, there are questions on her mind right now that she wanted to ask Lisa but she was too shy to do so. What she can hope for is for Lisa to tell her everything.

"Are you sure?"

"As long as you don't mind telling me."

Lisa shifted her position on the chair, thinking how to relay the story.

Maybe this is what she meant when she said she wants us to be friends?

"Yeah, I don't mind." said Lisa.

"Okay, I'm all ears now," said Jennie. "Don't worry about me. It's weekend. I've got time. I don't have any plans for this day either, so just spill it all out."

"Oh, okay. But it's a long story. I think I should start with myself first. Do you mind?"

"No. Not at all." Jennie gave an assuring smile. Lisa felt relieved with that.

Lisa started her story by telling Jennie that she was raised by nannies. Since her mom died, her dad busied himself to work, which required a lot of traveling. Although they keep in touch every day, they rarely see each other lately.

"But didn't you feel alone, or unwanted? Your dad was always out," asked Jennie. She also grew up with one parent but her mom was always there for her.

"I did. I've always felt that. Maybe that's the reason I appreciate a smile more than any other people. For me a smile is a sacred thing," said Lisa,

making Jennie remembered the collection of photos in the other room. "It became my hobby, my obsession. I wanted to collect pictures of people with the best smiles, capturing that moment when the smile is in it's most natural state."

"Wow. A smile addict?"

Lisa laughed. "Yeah. Well, what can I do? I love it. I even despise those magazine covers with lame smiles on it. Remember that issue last month of Dazed magazine featuring Jeon Somi?"

Jennie quickly glanced at the ceiling, trying to recall. "Yeah. I think I remember that."

"Did you notice how fake Somi's smile was on that cover? Damn. It was a mistake publishing that issue."

Jennie couldn't help but smile at it. She finally understood the reason why Lisa is overly nice to everybody --- because she always wanted to feel welcomed.

"I guess my addiction to a smile was one of the reasons why Irene and I became close," continued Lisa. "I met her during my freshmen year in college. I was an aspiring photographer, she was an aspiring model, you know; we clicked right away. What I really liked about her was her smile. I like the way how those smiles appear in the picture. Those smiles are lovely and she's really beautiful."

Jennie raised an eyebrow at the emphasis of the last word. "So, you had a crush on her?"

"Umm. To be honest, I'm not sure," said Lisa, hesitating. "I admire her beauty, yes. I like her, yes, but there was nothing romantic going on that time yet."

"Yet," said Jennie, flat faced.

"We were friends that time, Jen. I never had the notion it would result to something more. It's just that Irene is beautiful inside and out."

Jennie remembered how Irene's photo looked so perfect. "I have to agree. She really is beautiful."

"We became close because of our picture taking sessions. After running out of ideas for places to shoot, we decided to try taking pictures here. That's when she found out that I was living alone," Lisa narrated. "Having a natural caring personality, Irene decided to help me with.. with everything."

"Are you saying that you sort of live together here?" asked Jennie.

"No, she didn't move in. It never got to that point in the first place." answered Lisa. "But she was always here. I gave her the duplicate keys so she could stop by anytime she likes to. That's when she started helping me with the laundry, in cleaning my apartment, accompanying me to the grocery, and even taking care of me when I was down with flu. She practically took care of me, you know. She even woke me up for school."

Jennie was listening eagerly. Now she understood why Irene acted like she owns the place when she came in earlier. If any of those fan girls in the office will find out about her, they'd surely die in jealousy.

Lisa continued her story, "I was really not into school that time. I did a lot of travelling, touring, just to take pictures of people. Irene was mad about it because I quit school to pursue that hobby. Then there's one time where I got into a car accident. That was the first time I felt Irene's care for me isn't just what I thought it was."

It got more interesting. Jennie remembered Jisoo's words about Lisa being in a hospital.

"That happened during her last year in college and while I was out of school," said Lisa. "After that incident, Irene and I had this relationship that neither of us could define."

"How did it start?"

"We didn't know how it started," said Lisa coyly. "It just rolled out like that. The feelings just went deeper every day. She started doing sweet things to me and I did the same thing to her. I obeyed her every whim and she listened to all the things I've said. We are even in touch even if we're not physically together."

Of all the things Lisa said, the "sweet things" reverberated on Jennie's head. "Lisa, can I ask you a personal question?"

"Go ahead."

"Did you guys.. kiss..?"

Jennie disregarded the thought of being disgusted by the picture of two females kissing. What she really wanted to know is if Lisa and Irene have tried doing it.

Lisa felt her face burning right away. "Uh.. nope..."

"You haven't tried it? Why?" It might be hard to believe but Jennie was happy with the answer.

"I don't know. I guess I never thought of trying that?"

"Really? I thought you were together?"

Lisa unconsciously glanced on Jennie's lips because of the topic. She looked away immediately. "We're not officially together. There was no label on our relationship. We were just sort of sweet friends."

Seeing Lisa blushed, Jennie smiled to herself. "Sweet friends, huh? So how long did you stay like that?"

"It was for almost a year. We've known each other for three years that time but the romantic friendship we had lasted for just a year."

"Then what happened?"

"After graduation, she left for Singapore. She had an offer there from a modelling agency."

"Is that how you guys broke up?"

Lisa sighed. "Yeah, sort of. I guess you could say that was a break up. It was just last year. I was so devastated when she left. I felt like a part of me was gone."

"Does she know about it?"

"I don't know." Lisa shrugged. "But I made sure to let her know that I don't want her to go away. She promised to see me when she comes back, and that's what happened earlier."

"But how can she walk away like that? Didn't she love you?"

"I don't know. We never talked about love, not even once. We just showed how much we cared for each other and that's it."

"How about you? Did you love her?"

"Thinking of my demise when she left, yes, I think I did," said Lisa. "I couldn't understand that time why I was able to rely on myself alone for nineteen years, and then Irene came for a while, left me, and everything wasn't the same anymore."

"I did everything that she wanted," Lisa continued. "I finished my last year in college, became more focused on my goals, I stopped going to bars, I joined the tennis club. I did everything to make my life better. After college, I immediately applied for a job. I'd like to prove to her that I can change, that I do have dreams as well."

"So, what did you feel when you saw her earlier?"

"To tell you the truth, I was confused," said Lisa, heaving another sigh. "I know it's weird. You see, I've been waiting over a year for this day to come, and then when she arrived at my doorstep I just didn't know what to do. In fact a part of me wished she never came here today."

Jennie tried her best not to smile at the newfound information. "Really? Why?"

Lisa dropped her gaze on the floor. "Because... Because I was already having a good time with you."

Jennie was secretly surprised about it. She didn't expect that she'd be relieved to hear that from Lisa.

"It's just that she managed to ruin the mood when she came. I thought you're gonna leave right away." Lisa was still looking down, acting like a child who's afraid to lose a precious toy.

Jennie smiled. "Why would I do that? You still owe me a service to my house."

Lisa's face lit up with that. "Thanks, Jen. Thanks for sticking around."

Their conversation had totally eradicated the awkward ambiance of the room. Jennie started to feel so close and comfortable around Lisa more than ever. Lisa, on the other hand, felt relieved to have found a friend whom she can confide about her life.

"I was just wondering, Lisa, have you ever liked someone else aside from Irene?" asked Jennie.

Lisa shook her head no. "After she left, I focused on my studies right away. I even disconnected myself from Jisoo and the bar life."

Jennie tapped two fingers on her chin. "You know what, I think you're still being hunted by the past. You can't move on because you don't have closure with Irene."

Lisa blinked at that.

"The reason you're like that is because you never officially ended your unofficial relationship. Deep in yourself, you're still hoping that when Irene comes back you'll be like how you we're before," said Jennie. "I really think

that you need to talk, you and Irene, so you could decide on what you really want. Then ask her directly if she loves you."

"But she has a boyfriend already."

"She might have a boyfriend but I believe that you have a special place in her heart," said Jennie. "The fact that she came here today, even after being apart for a year, is a proof that she loves you. It might not be in the way you're expecting it but still, she cares."

Lisa smiled. "And since when you become an expert in this?"

Jennie raised her palms up. "I don't know. That just came out. I have no idea where I got them."

"Well, we keep on talking about me here. How about you, any ex-lovers?"
Lisa rested her chin on her hands.

"Nah. I've always been a picky eater when it comes to that aspect."

"Oh, Jennie, you won't find Mr. Perfect, I assure you that. Every person has their own flaws."

"I know that. Im not looking for Mr. Perfect. I'm just looking for... Mr. Right..."

Lisa took a deep breath in. The term 'Mr. Right' disturbed her. "But are you open to having a relationship now?"

"I think I am, as long as I find him right for me."

"So, what is right for you?"

Jennie wrinkled her nose while thinking of what to say. "Mmm. Honestly, I don't know. The problem is I don't easily fall in love."

"Psh! It's not like that." Lisa waved a hand. "You just haven't met the right one yet."

"I don't know if it's because we haven't met yet, or maybe.. maybe I just didn't know when to determine if what I feel is love or not," Jennie said, her hand gesturing in the air.

"That's impossible, Jen. Once you felt love, you'll know it for sure."

"The thing is I have been dating suitors for a while now. None of them made me feel different."

"Hmm, maybe it just hasn't hit you yet?"

"At least you think I'm still normal," said Jennie, chuckling. "I'm starting to think that there is something wrong with me. I'm having a hard time getting some real love, you know?"

"Don't look for it. Love doesn't work that way. It's the one going to find you, regardless if you're ready or not. And if it finds you, there are no ways you could escape it."

"Am I hearing this from the expert?" Jennie teased, raising an eyebrow. Lida just laughed at her.

"Okay, here we are, Madame." Lisa pulled up the handbrake of her car when they arrived in front of Jennie's house.

"Lisa, I'd like to invite you inside, but..." Jennie trailed off while unbuckling her seatbelt. She's having doubts of saying what's on her mind. It would be unkind not to invite Lisa inside but she knows her homophobic mom will be uncomfortable with it.

"It's okay, Jen. I have plans. I still have tennis practice in two hours."

"Okay." Jennie felt relieved. At least she didn't need to come up with excuses. "I'll see you on Monday then?"

"Yup, Monday."

"Thanks, Lisa." Jennie opened the door on her side. "I really had a great time today. Take care, okay?"

"Aye, aye, princess!"

Jennie pushed the door close and waved goodbye.

Jennie opened the door of their house, relieved that Lisa didn't bother to stay for a while. She feels happy though. Their heart to heart conversation had made her feel more comfortable around Lisa. It just feels like she finally understood Lisa deeper. She's glad because they both share the same things now, personal things, which nobody in their office knows yet.

"Why didn't you invite your friend inside?"

Jennie almost jumped after hearing her mom's voice. "S-she said she has plans this afternoon."

Did she saw us inside the car? Impossible. Lisa's car is tinted.

"Did you have your lunch already?" her mom asked, leaning forward to kiss her.

"Yeah. We had it before we drove here."

"Is that your friend's blouse?"

Realizing what she's wearing now is different from her wardrobe preference, Jennie knew she had to be careful. "Y-yeah, I had to borrow this because my blouse was stinky."

Her mom stared at the button-down shirt. "Your friend seems to have a unique taste in clothing, Jennie."

"Yeah. She's a photographer and graphic artist in the office. People in their department usually wear something unique and artistic."

"Hmm, she looks like a tall woman to me."

"She is tall." Jennie smiled to make it seem that she isn't hiding anything. She motioned to the stairs. "I'll just go to my room now."

"Okay."

Sighs. Why does Monday feel like eons anyway?

Jennie is currently on her bed looking at the ceiling, lost in thoughts. She didn't know how to rate her day; sad, normal, happy? She knows she should be happy because she found a new friend in Lisa.

On the other hand, she's a bit anxious. There's something about Irene that concerns her a lot. Is it because of Irene's past relationship with Lisa? Or is it because of Lisa's inarticulacy when Irene is around?

Lali and Hyun, huh? But why do I feel envious of you, Irene?

Chat

It's Monday and there's something different about it. For whatever reason, Jennie is excited to go to work today. She woke up early, had her breakfast, and left for office right away. She came in too early that she had the entire floor to herself when she arrived.

She immediately checked the list of her online friends in their internal messenger. Lisa's status is still colored gray.

She's not here yet.

She stood up, retouched herself in the ladies' room, grabbed herself a coffee in the pantry and went back to her table to check her friend's list again.

Still not in.

She checked her emails this time. Slowly, people are coming in one by one. Although her table is located at the center of the floor, she can't see who comes in and goes out because her back is facing the entrance.

"Good morning, Jennie!" Suho, who just arrived, greeted her.

"Hi Suho," said Jennie, smiling at him. The guy stopped and stare at her. Jennie noticed it. "What's the matter?"

Suho crossed his arms. "There's something different about you, Jennie."

"And what is that?"

"I'm not sure..." He walked towards her. "You just seem so vibrant. You look blooming today."

"Does that mean I don't look blooming in some other days?"

"Oh, c'mon. You're always beautiful, darling. There's just something different right now," he said, scanning her. "New haircut?"

"No."

He scanned her more. "Hmm, new hair color?" Jennie shook her head. Suho held her chin this time and asked, "Are you using new make-up?"

"No."

"Don't tell me you already have a boyfriend."

Jennie smiled at that. She shook her head no.

"That smile, Jen, I knew it! There must be someone!" he exclaimed, pointing a finger at her.

Jennie waved her hand. "Nah. I just had a great weekend. There's no special someone yet."

"Oh really? I don't know why but my intuition says I should not believe you."

"Oh, Suho, don't make a fuss out of it."

"Fine! Fine! I'll wait until you're ready to spill the details," he said, walking back to his station.

After the conversation, she checked her friend's list again to her disappointment.

Offline.

She shifted her eyes at the bottom of the screen to check the time.

It's already 7:53, what time does she usually arrives?

At that instant moment, she saw Lisa's status changed color from gray to green. The little notification appeared.

Lalisa Manoban is online.

She moved her mouse to Lisa's name and clicked it twice. A new window popped up to start a conversation. Her hands motioned to the keyboards. But then, she stopped the idea.

Wait, what am I doing? What should I tell her? Do I really have to message her now?

Jennie found herself staring at her monitor, hands clasped on her chin. The only reason she added Lisa before is for the lipstick project they worked on together. She can't remember the last time they chat, and the probable reason for that conversation was all regarding the project.

After a few seconds of uncertainty, she clicked the close button with her mouse. She leaned at the backrest of her chair and stared at the ceiling with both her hands on her tummy.

Kling!

The chat message notification made Jennie rose up. A sweet smile flashed on her face after checking it.

"Good morning, princess. 😊"

Without having second thoughts, Jennie replied right away, *"Morning, Lisa."*

It took just a few seconds for Lisa to reply, *"How was your weekend?"*

"Boring. Sunday was the worst. How about you, what happened to your tennis practice?"

"Just same ol' stuff. Got so tired after the practice. Sunday was boring for me too. 😞"

"Ooh, poor Lisa, always alone. 😔"

"You should probably visit me often. 😊"

"I think you should buy a pet, you know, so you won't get bored somehow."

"Come to think of it. I haven't thought of that until now, Jennie."

"You love cats or dogs?"

"Hmm. Do you think turtles are going to be a fun pet around? 😊"

Jennie glanced at Mrs. Lee beside the monitor. She's not aware that she's still smiling. She typed her reply, *"If you're patient enough to wait for it to greet you, I guess it's going to be fun around. 😊"*

"Cool! I'm gonna buy one soon!"

"So, how's you and Ire ---"

Jennie wanted to ask about Irene but was hesitant about it. She deleted her message.

"Hey, Jen," a message appeared again, even before Jennie was able to respond to the previous chat.

"Yeah?"

"Do you know what turtles use to communicate?"

"I have no idea."

"C'mon, make a wild guess. 😊"

"Mmm, are they using radio waves like bats?"

"No, they are using shell-phones! Hahaha! 😊😊😊"

Jennie couldn't understand how a simple corny joke like that made her smile. She was giggling silently in her station, trying to keep it to herself so no one would notice.

"😊 I can't believe I bought that one, Lisa. 😊"

"Have you had your breakfast yet?" Lisa was typing too fast. It seems like she isn't doing anything yet.

"Yeah, I had it at home."

"Good for you."

"How about you?"

"Nobody prepares food for me. ☹"

Jennie was too busy on her computer and she didn't notice the people around her arriving. *"Don't tell me you're skipping breakfast?"*

"No, I'm having a burger now. ☺ "

Jennie looked up, imagining Lisa eating a burger in her station. *"Is that what you're having every day?"*

"Yes, most of the time. Why?"

"Wow. You're killing yourself, Lisa."

"I know, but I don't have a choice."

"Can't cook your own food?"

"Love to but I don't want to. Cooking is only fun if you're sharing the food with someone."

"You mean you always go out even for dinner?"

"Yup, every single time."

"You must get some real food, Lisa, even for breakfast only."

"I told you, I don't have time for that. Unless someone here is kind enough to prepare my breakfast. ☺"

Jennie smiled at the idea. *"Fine. I'll bring you breakfast tomorrow."*

"WOW! Really????"

"Of course. Consider it as a token of gratitude for carrying me to your apartment."

"Yehey! 😊"

"Be sure to arrive her 7:15 tomorrow, okay?"

"I will your highness. Thank you! "

"What time did you arrive today?"

"About ten minutes ago. I saw you talking to Suho."

"Oh, I didn't notice you come in."

"How would you notice? Your back is facing the entrance. 😊"

"Yeah I know that."

"Were you waiting for me?"

Jennie's fingers on the keyboard were frozen. After few more seconds she replied. *"No, why would I wait for you?"*

Lisa replied fast, *"Aww, that's too bad. 😊"*

"Why is it bad?"

It took few more seconds before Lisa to reply, *"Because I miss you. 😊"*

Jennie instantly shuddered in delight after reading the message. She even have to look away from the screen just to contain the feeling. When she turned around she Rosé looking at her.

"Hey, Jen. Who is that? Why are you blushing?" Rosé who just arrived, dropped her shoulder bag on her chair.

Jennie immediately shook her head, unaware that she cannot get the smile off her face. "It's nothing, Rosé."

"Oh, c'mon. I don't believe you! Why do you look so happy? Who are you chatting with?" asked Rosé, coming over.

Without further ado, Jennie closed the conversation window before Rosé sees it.

Rosé's excitement rose up when she saw the chat box closed. "Why did you close it? Who's that?"

"No one."

"No one? I don't believe you, Jen. I haven't seen you smile like that before. Who's the lucky guy?"

"No one important, Rosé. Just forget about it, okay?"

"How can I forget about it? Look at yourself, you're blushing."

Kling!

Oh shit!

Rosé and Jennie stared at each other for a second, waiting who'll make the first move.

"Let me see! Let me see!" Rosé grabbed the mouse right away."

"No! No!" Jennie was doing her best, forcefully trying to remove Rosé's hand from the mouse.

But Rosé was stronger. She clicked on the notification and opened the conversation box.

"Good morning, Jennie. How are you? ☺"

"It's Kai?" Rosé shoot Jennie a suspicious look. "Did something happened last Friday that I missed?"

Oh my, that was close.

"Nothing, Lisa drove Kai home first, and then she drove me home.. after.."
Jennie lied. She doesn't know why she was lying in the first place. Well, it's not purely a lying. Lisa drove her home after 15 hours.

"Ooh, you're hiding something from me," said Rosé, still suspicious.

"I'm not."

"I'll ask Lisa and Kai about it."

"I told you, nothing happened." Jennie got a bit worried what will happen is Rosé ask Lisa instead.

"But did you enjoy our little party last Friday?"

The party didn't matter to Jennie, she had more fun after. "Yeah, I enjoyed it. How about you, I remember we left you and Jisoo at the bar, right?"

A wide smile slipped across Rosé's face. "Jisoo is soooo sweet..."

"So... You're into her this time?" Poker-faced Jennie asked.

"I guess I am. I enjoyed her company a lot. After that, we went to see each other again on weekend."

Jennie can't help but admire how fast things are going between Jisoo and Rosé. "So... What about Lisa?"

"I still like Lisa. I really do, but I have this feeling that she's not into me."
Rosé held Jennie's hands. "I have a feeling that she likes somebody."

"Who?" asked Jennie, pretending she doesn't have any idea about it.

"I don't know. I could ask Jisoo about it. But yeah, I think Lisa is in love with someone else."

Jennie didn't say anything. She knows who's that someone. She'd seen her. In fact, she'd shaken hands with her already.

Irene.

Jennie couldn't reply to Lisa's message after that because she was afraid that Rosé might look into her conversation again. Plus, she doesn't know what to respond as well.

It's nearly the end of the day and she hasn't gotten a glimpse of Lisa yet. Something inside her wants to see how Lisa looks today. What kind of shirt she's wearing, or she's wearing her favorite bucket hat again. She was also asking herself why Lisa didn't bother to visit her when she said that she misses her.

It came to a point where Jennie was already thinking of excuses to go to Kai's department. However, she kept on suppressing the thought because she doesn't want to be branded as one of Lisa's fangirls.

"Hey, Lisa, I haven't seen you fooling around here today?"

Jennie whipped her head around when she heard Rosé spoke. Rosé happens to see all the people who walk in and out in that area.

Lisa, who's just passing by after getting water from the pantry, stopped in front of Rosé's terminal. "Yeah, just busy, you know, Monday."

"What happened to you guys last Friday? Did I miss something?" asked Rosé.

Lisa got interested. She placed her tumbler above Rosé's terminal. "Nothing important, why?"

"Well..." Rosé turned her body to Jennie. "Someone's acting different today."

Lisa glanced at Jennie for a second but immediately looked away when their eyes met. She had to avert her gaze because she feels too shy to look at Jennie who's so stunning today.

That morning, when Lisa came, she saw Suho and Jennie talking. Anyone who enters through the door will immediately get a glimpse of Jennie's back. It is a view that Lisa starting to love looking at each time she passes the hallway.

"And what's different about her?" Lisa asked.

"Well.. there's someone making her happy..." said Rosé, teasing.

Lisa looked back at Jennie and saw her already doing something in her station. "Is this someone I know?"

"Rosé, stop it." Jennie warned.

Rosé hesitated for a moment to speak. She knew she'll be dead if she disobeyed.

"What's that?" Lisa asked. She can't control her curiosity.

Rosé left out a soft giggle. "It's just that I caught Jennie this morning, blushing while chatting with Kai."

Lisa's eyebrows furrowed. The entire morning, she thought that the reason Jennie didn't respond to her is because she felt uncomfortable. And because of that notion, Lisa felt shy of what she did to the point that she lost the guts to visit Jennie in her station even if she wanted to.

And now, hearing from Rosé that it was because of Kai made her feel uneasy.

"It's not like what you're thinking, Rosé," said Jennie, covering her face with her palms.

"Then why were you blushing like a teenager earlier? Stop denying it." Rosé accused. She turned to Lisa. "Did something happen to your two drunk passengers last Friday, Lisa?"

Lisa shook her head. "I drove Kai home first, then I drove Jennie home.." she paused a bit, then continued. "..after. Nothing really happened."

Lisa noticed Jennie's shoulders moved, like she was giggling. Jennie glanced at her quickly, smiling. Lisa smiled back.

"Hmm, maybe Jennie and Kai had a date last Saturday. What do you think, Lisa?" Rosé who's unaware of what happened asked again.

"I have no clue, Rosé." Lisa shook her head to make it look more convincing.

"I'm just curious.." Rosé was thinking out loud, "I thought Jennie didn't like Kai, but this morning, she's really blushing, Lisa. I saw it."

"It wasn't Kai, Rosé." Jennie said in a flat tone, facing her monitor.

Both Lisa and Rosé's attention were on Jennie who doesn't seem to want to face them at the moment.

"Then who is it?" asked Rosé.

"It's.. somebody else, not Kai." Jennie admitted, her back is still on Lisa and Rosé.

"Ooooooh, I see." Rosé let out a teasing tone.

Lisa's jaw dropped slightly. Her heartbeat rose. She tried to hold off her smile after finally understanding the reason why Jennie couldn't respond to her.

"Then who is it, Jennie?" Lisa thanked Rosé in her mind for the follow-up question.

"Eee... I'm not telling you that..." Jennie yowled, still facing her monitor, covering her face with her palms.

Lisa is secretly smiling now. She couldn't help it. On the back of her head, she doesn't want to hear Jennie admit it in front of Rosé as it will be hella awkward.

"I-uh... I think I'm going back to my station. It's already five o'clock." Lisa said.

"Ugh! Saved by the bell. Okay, Lisa. We'll resume interrogation tomorrow," said Rosé.

"Yeah." Lisa waved goodbye and left right away.

Jennie felt relieved after that. She doesn't know what to do anymore. She doesn't want them to think that it was because of Kai but she was also too shy to admit that it was because of Lisa.

She tried her best to hide her blushing face from Lisa and Rosé. She was also hoping that Lisa would have at least an idea that it was all about her. But the idea of letting Lisa know about it makes her want to disappear from where she's sitting.

Kling!

Jennie is still scratching her head from embarrassment when she heard her new message notification. She opened the message.

"I'll see you tomorrow 7:15 am for breakfast. Ciao!"

Then Lisa went offline.

Jennie smiled.

Oh, Lisa.

Breakfast

I can't believe it, she's really here!

Lisa was discreetly peeking from the door entrance. From her view in the hallway, she can see Jennie's back clearly. She pulled away her sleeve to look at her wristwatch.

It's only 7:07, I wonder, what time did she arrived?

She peeked through the door again, observing Jennie's every movement. Jennie is currently browsing something on the internet. She's wearing a black blouse and her hair isn't tied today.

Sigh. I think I can do this all day without complain, even just looking at her back, observing her like this.

Jennie moved to her left to check on something. Lisa immediately hid beside the door, afraid that she'll get caught peeking.

What the hell is wrong with me? Why am I hiding? We're supposed to have breakfast today that's why we're here early!

After few seconds she peeked again. Jennie's now browsing something. Lisa raised her wrist.

Tsk. It's already 7:11. I'll be dead if she won't see me by 7:15.

She entered the door slowly, tiptoeing. Although that she knows her snickers won't make any annoying sound on the carpeted floor she's still afraid to create anything that could catch Jennie's attention. The idea of being alone with Jennie today somehow frightens her. She'd love to spend time with Jennie, of course, but she doesn't know how to start a conversation.

"And what do you think you're doing?" Jennie's irritated tone echoed on the floor.

Lisa turned nervously and saw Jennie's grumpy expression. "Uhh... Hi?"

"Didn't occur to you that I can hear every movement you make? It's just the two of us here."

"Uh.. yeah.. well..."

"It's almost 7:15 now, how long are you planning to make me wait?"

"Uhh... I'm just dropping my things in my station..."

"Make it quick."

"Yes, Ma'am." Lisa hurried to her department.

The pantry looks more vibrant today because no one is there yet to disturbed their little date. Lisa is still feeling awkward about the idea she had yesterday regarding Jennie's mysterious chat mate.

On the other hand, Jennie wasn't also acting herself today. She's excited to go to the office --- yes --- however, but she doesn't know why she feels nervous at the same time.

They settled one of the tables and sat down facing each other.

"Hmm. What did you bring today?" asked Lisa, curiously looking at the lunchbox in front of her.

"My mom prepared Kimchi fried rice and Khao Khai Chiao," Jennie said, opening the covers. Truth is she requested her mom to cook that. She lied and told her mom that their will be a potluck breakfast in the office.

"Wow! I'm so famished now, Jen!" Lisa's hyper action swayed the awkwardness away between the two of them.

"I'm hungry too. I hope you'll like it."

Lisa scooped spoon full of Kimchi fried rice. She raised her eyebrows after a bite. "Hmm.. this is good! Your mom surely knows how to cook."

"Now, that's what you call a real breakfast, Lisa." said Jennie, feeling victorious seeing Lisa enjoying the food.

"How about you, Jen, you cook?"

Jennie shook her head and started eating. "Nah, I was never a fan of recipe books."

"Why?"

"I don't know. I just don't like cooking. It's too boring for me."

"You don't have plans of cooking for future hubby?"

"Well, I might change my mind in the future, I don't know yet. But right now, I really don't want to," said Jennie, taking another bite of food. "I always imagined myself being paired with someone who loves to cook anyway."

Lisa abruptly stopped whatever she's doing, glanced at Jennie for a moment and then dropped her gaze back at the food, smiling.

Jennie noticed it. "What?"

"Nothing..."

"Then why are you smiling?"

"I don't know... I just... I just love the food."

"Liar!"

Lisa took a bite of Khao Khai Chiao and taunted Jennie with a silly smile.

"I.. hate.. you..." Jennie trailed off in between bites while pointing her fork at Lisa. Seeing that smile from Lisa made her blush a little.

"So, it's the end of the year this weekend. What are your plans?" asked Lisa, changing the topic.

"Our usual routine is to visit dad's grave in the morning, and then stay at my cousin's place for the New Year's Eve celebration."

"Oh, really? I didn't know that your dad is..."

"Yeah, when I was still in the 8th grade."

"Oh, I'm sorry."

"It's okay. You've also lost one of yours too, right?"

"Yeah, too bad for us." Lisa pouted.

"How about you, any plans? Don't tell me you're all alone again." asked Jennie.

Lisa shook her head. "I'm going to Taiwan. My dad's there right now. We'll be celebrating New Year's Eve together."

"Wow, that's good to hear. At least you have something to do that day."

"Yeah, it's not every day we get to see each other so we make sure that we won't let occasions like this pass by just like that."

"And you should see your dad once in a while too. He surely misses you from time to time."

"Well, he does, if he doesn't have a girlfriend," Lisa joshed.

"Oh, you, Lisa."

"Speaking of that, do you think it's a good idea if we set up a blind date for your mom and and my dad?"

"Do you think your dad will like my mom?"

"I'm sure he will. Well, you're pretty, where else could you get your looks from, right?"

Although Lisa was unaware of what she said, Jennie surely heard it as loud as bomb explosion. She showed a devious smile with one eyebrow raised.

"You think I'm pretty?"

Lisa's jaw dropped. It was not really her intention to sit in front of this petite lady. In fact, she feels awkward knowing that Jennie will be able to see all her movements. But if the retribution of sitting there is the view she's seeing now then she had surely made the right decision.

"Oh, c'mon, Jen, let's be honest here. Yes. I think you're pretty."

Jennie's mouth fell slightly agape seeing Lisa's serious face.

"...pretty ugly. Hahahahaha!"

Jennie shifted her expression from shocked to a don't-mess-with-me look.

"Besides, I love your mom's cooking, it's a plus point." said Lisa.

Jennie dropped her utensils and rested her chin on her hand. "Lisa, if your dad and my mom will end up together, what will become of us?"

Lisa stopped eating for a second. She realized that if her dad and Jennie's mom marry each other, then it'll make Jennie and her sort of relatives.

"It's... It's a bad idea, Jennie. Let's forget about it."

"Agree. Bad idea."

The two turned their attention to the door when someone came in.

"Hello there, Lisa. You're early today, huh?" The woman said when she passed by their table, giving Lisa a quick tap on the shoulder.

Lisa's head followed the woman who's going to get a coffee from vending machine.

"Hi, Mina, 'sup?"

Jennie observed the girl. She didn't know that Lisa was already acquainted with her. This girl belongs to another department that neither Lisa or her are working with.

The woman pressed something on the vending machine. "I'm okay. What are your plans for the holiday?"

"I'm traveling."

"Wow, where are you fooling around?"

"Somewhere nearby countries. You?"

"Just staying home." The woman grabbed the cup, walked towards them and touched Lisa on the shoulder again. "Bring me back something special, okay?"

Lisa smiled. "Sure." She pointed at her food and said, "You wanna join us?"

Although Lisa wasn't looking at her, Jennie glared at Lisa, telepathically saying that the food shouldn't be shared to anyone.

"I better not, Lis," said the woman. She subtly rolled her eyes at Jennie before starting to walk away. "I'll go ahead."

"I'll see you around," said Lisa as the woman exits the door.

After they heard the door latch Jennie spoke up, "Mina, huh?"

"Yeah, she's Mina. Why?"

"How did you get to know her?"

"Hmm. Should I not know my colleagues?"

"How long have you been here again?"

"Hmm. Almost five months."

"You know what, I've been here for more than two years and I have no idea what's the name of that woman," said Jennie, pointing at the door. "And you, you've been here for just a few months, Lisa, and it seems like you already know everybody."

"Well..." Lisa tried to recollect how she got acquainted with Mina, "...Kai introduced her to me."

"Ahh, Kai."

"And we chat sometimes, you know. Something wrong?"

"Nothing. I just didn't realize you really are that popular."

"Why, are you jealous?" said Lisa, smirking.

"Excuse me?" Jennie scowled back. "You didn't see how that woman glared at me. It seems like I've put myself in danger today just by having breakfast with you!"

"G-glared at you? Why would she do that?" asked Lisa. Jennie just rolled her eyes. "Well, you're popular with the boys too, you know."

"But I'm not as flirty as you are, Lisa."

Lisa raised her fork. "The term is 'nice', Jennie, 'nice'."

Jennie rolled her eyes again. "Whatever." She thought of teasing Lisa by showing a seductive smile. "Why, are you jealous?"

"Uh ---" Lisa was caught unguarded. She knows that her weakness is a smile and Jennie. Just imagine what she felt seeing the both at the same time.

Lisa was saved by the humiliation of blushing when two ladies came in from the door. They greeted her right away. They gave out the same glare at Jennie. Few more minutes passed, more and more people are getting in the office. Few more employees came in the pantry. Lisa addressed them in their names and Jennie can't seem to remember. Jennie felt and saw the obvious disappointment of the fan girls to see Lisa eating with someone else today.

"I think we should finish this right away," said Jennie, dropping her utensils.

"You're done already?"

"I'm just worried about my own sake."

"Huh?"

"I believe this breakfast might have served as a catalyst for 'eliminate Jennie' faction here in the office."

Lisa got confused. "I don't seem to follow what you're saying."

Jennie crossed her arms on the table. "Lisa, your fan girls, they want to kill me."

"What are you saying?" Lisa asked, laughing.

Jennie shifted to a depressed pose by resting her head on her hands. "Aaaaagh! What have I done?"

Lisa leaned forward to look at Jennie's face. "Hey, you alright?"

"Can't you see, your fan girls, they we're all jealous of me."

"Why would they be jealous, we were only eating here."

"That's exactly the reason they are jealous. They obviously don't want me to be the one in front of you now."

"That's impossible."

"Oh, c'mon, Lisa. You didn't see how they looked at me. If a glare could kill people, I'm probably dead by now." said Jennie, upset.

Lisa smiled because of exaggeration. "I'm sorry about that."

"Hmp! What would you do if someone attacks me?"

"They wouldn't go that far."

"From the way they glared at me, I think they can, Lisa. Seriously."

Lisa can't erase the smile on her face. "You know what, let me make it up to you."

"How?"

"Let me drive you home today."

Jennie liked the idea but she's still hesitant.

"C'mon, consider it as a gratitude for the breakfast." Lisa pointed at the food.

Lisa's serious tone sounded irresistible for Jennie. "But your fan girls might see us together."

"Oh. Then let's meet at the parking lot discreetly. I'll go first then I'll wait for you."

Jennie finally smiled. "Okay. Sounds like a plan."

"You up for the deal?" Lisa raised her hand for a fist bump.

Jennie smacked her closed fist to Lisa's. "Deal."

"Now, where is that little lady?"

Lisa is tapping her fingers on the steering wheel, having doubts now if Jennie is showing or not. She's been in her car for the last fifteen minutes and there's no trace of Jennie yet anywhere.

Lisa turned the radio on and rested her head on the backseat. She tried to recall if she had given Jennie the right direction to her car's location. After a few more seconds, she finally got a glimpse of a shadow walking towards the entrance. She smiled. She knows that shadow well.

"Are you serious?" Lisa whispered to herself after seeing Jennie.

Jennie had her shades on and her shawl is wrapped around her head. Although Lisa thinks it's attractive, she knows the reason of Jennie's appearance. She opened the door to the passenger seat to let Jennie in.

"Sorry to keep you waiting." Jennie pulled the door and locked it. She removed her shawl and started fixing her hair.

"What's that?" asked Lisa, referring to the shawl.

"It's called a disguise, Lisa. I'm pretty sure you've heard about it."

"I know, but do you really have to do that?"

"I just don't want to be noticed by your fan girls. The pressure is still high for now."

They drove out of that building. While on the road, both were silent in the car while listening to the radio. Lisa was peeking on Jennie from time to time with her peripheral vision while Jennie was looking out the window.

Getting filled with Jennie's cuteness, Lisa couldn't hold off her feelings and produced an audible chuckle.

Jennie noticed it. "Why are you smiling?"

"Nothing," said Lisa, still smiling, brushing aside her bangs of her eyes.

That's when Jennie's attention was diverted to Lisa's hair. She stretched her arm to touch it.

"Hey ---" Lisa felt the tickling sensation all over her body just because Jennie touch her head. "W-what are you doing, Jennie?"

"I just noticed that your hair is long," said Jennie, stroking Lisa's hair with her fingers, "and it's soft."

Lisa scratched her head. "Yeah, but at least let me know first if you're touching me, I'm driving, you know..."

Jennie removed her hand and smiled. "Why, is it a ticklish spot?"

"Y-yeah..."

Jennie leaned closer. "I'm just wondering, don't you like it short?"

"I like it shorter since it's more manageable and comfortable."

"Then why let it grow?"

"Well.."

"Well..?"

Lisa doesn't have any reason at all, so she told the truth, "Irene, she wants it this way."

Jennie felt disappointed. Since yesterday she'd tried her best not to talk about Irene. Although she's been dying to know if Irene and Lisa had spoken already, she's still afraid to ask any updates about it. She knows that Irene is someone that she can't compete with in terms of Lisa's attention.

"She used to pony my hair before when she goes to my place," Lisa continued, her eyes on the road. "She says that I look like a cute little kid with that."

"You maintained your hair for her to see it when she comes back?" asked Jennie, getting a nod from Lisa. "Do you want her back?"

It took time for Lisa to answer, "Honestly, I don't know. If you asked me that question six months ago there's no doubt I'd say yes. But now, I'm not sure anymore."

"Why?"

"Like you said, Irene and I really need to talk. Maybe we need closure. Or maybe we just need to figure out what we really feel for each other. I'm not even sure how I'd feel if I'd see her with her boyfriend."

"What if.. what if you saw them and you realized that you're jealous of her boyfriend, what would you do?"

Lisa hasn't thought of that yet so she tried to imagine the scenario in her mind. "In case I get overly jealous of the dude then it will just prove that I still love her. If that happens then.." she paused for a while, still imagining things in her mind. "..then I might as well try, to the best of my luck, to win her back."

Jennie turned her gaze outside. She felt the rush of unexplainable feelings in her chest. It just made her think, is there anything that Lisa would do for her too?

They were silent again until they reached Jennie's house. Lisa was a bit disappointed because their trip wasn't as fun as she was expecting. Jennie seemed to have been attacked by her mood swings.

"We're here," said Lisa.

"Lisa..."

"Yeah..?"

"Do you still remember the game we played at the resort?"

Lisa smiled. "How could I forget that? You tricked me to my defeat."

Jennie smiled at the memory as well. "Do you remember the deal we made?"

"You said that the loser should do anything the winner's wishes, right?"

"I've already made up my mind on what I'd like you to do."

Lisa felt troubled seeing the sly smile on Jennie's face. "W-what is it?"

"Let it be until the end of the year, but on the first day of next year," Jennie stopped for a second and then pointed a finger, "I want you to get a hair cut."

Lisa's jaw dropped. "Please tell me you're not serious."

"I am, Lisa, I am."

"B-but that's ---"

"No more buts, Lisa, I've made up my mind."

Lisa's mouth opened, but no words came out.

"And if you won't do that, I won't talk to you again, ever," said Jennie, sounding more serious this time.

Lisa stared at Jennie. Jennie can't tell what Lisa is thinking.

"Got it?" Jennie asked to reassure.

A smile of defeat slipped across Lisa's lips. "Ooh, Jennie..."

Jennie stretched out her arm to tease Lisa by caressing her hair again. Lisa's obvious tickled reaction made Jennie laugh.

"Bye, Lisa. Thanks for the ride." Then she went out and pushed the car door closed.

Lisa entered her room, closed the door and threw her keys on the table. She sat on the couch, bringing both her hands to her nape, she looked up the ceiling, her mind flying somewhere else.

It was just last Saturday when this place was so luminous.

She smiled. Jennie has been continually lingering on her thoughts these past few days. She may not admit it at first but Jennie has been her source of excitement, a reason why she's so excited to go to the office every day.

She recalled the moments when Jennie was sitting at her dining, how Jennie looked gorgeous in her shirt. She remembered Jennie's sweet smile and how it sends her to ecstasy every time. The way Jennie calls her name, it's like lullaby in her ears. Everything about Jennie just invites Lisa.

Even though she's been having these weird feelings lately, it's just now that everything sunk into her. She just smiled at her realization.

"Oh, Jennie."

She closed her eyes and took a deep breath, remembering the sensation of Jennie's fingers on her hair. She reacted so hard with what Jennie had done not because she got tickled, but because she loved the sensation that's bringing shivers down her spine.

Lisa smiled again. A sweet soft smile. She might have had a hard time when Irene left but everything changed when Jennie came into the picture. It's like Jennie, in her own unique ways, had revived or awoken something inside Lisa.

It doesn't matter what Jennie does: laugh at her, tease her, or scold her. Lisa feels like she wants to surrender herself to Jennie.

And then it all started coming back to her: the first day they talked at the ladies' room, the first sarcastic smile Jennie gave her in the coaster, the first time Jennie called her by her name, the first time they talked alone in the rain, the game they played while it was raining, the warmth of her body, Jennie being drunk, her sweet scent, her lovely gummy smile, her beautiful

back. Everything is just all coming back. Lisa even had to shift her position on the couch to contain the emotion rush in her chest.

She shook her head and laughed at herself. She put her right hand on her chest, feeling the fast beat of her heart. She took a deep breath once again.

Sigh.

...I know...

...I know this might sound...

...crazy...

...yeah...crazy...

...but I...

...I think...

...yes...

...I think I...

She smiled one last time before admitting it to herself.

...I think I'm already In love with you, Jennie.

Serendipity

December 31st - Taiwan

Lisa is strolling around the streets of Taipei that cold morning, a coffee on one hand. She always loved the feeling of the wind breeze during that season. Her dad is currently busy with a client meeting --- which she wondered why it happened on the 31st --- so she made up excuses to go out.

Sigh. I'm terribly missing you now.

It's been two days since she last saw Jennie. Waiting for another two more days before she could see the woman's beautiful face again feels like hell. After her realization days ago, Lisa had accepted the fact that what she's feeling now is one-sided. She's not expecting anything from Jennie --- at least for now --- because she's contented with their little friendship.

Although she feels she has some importance in Jennie too, Lisa doesn't want to keep her hopes up. She is truly aware that Jennie's affection for her is pent within the barriers of friendship. The best Lisa could hope for is for Jennie to stay single while she's being hopeless romantic, or until she finds someone to channel the love she's feeling now. Hopefully, Jennie will not meet her Mr. Right yet so Lisa wouldn't have to endure the pain of seeing the woman with somebody else.

After walking for quite a while Lisa decided to take a break. She sat on a bench near a lamppost while sipping her coffee. She got the view of Taipei 101 in front of her.

Lisa could only simper when Jennie came into her mind once again. After admitting to herself that she had completely fallen in love with that petite lady, her thoughts have been in auto-pilot mode. Jennie is consistently on her mind, literally like every single minute of the day, even when asleep.

I wonder, is she thinking of me now?

The idea made Lisa giggled. It seems impossible but if ever that's the case, even just a tiny chance, then she'll be on cloud nine.

"Well, hello there, stranger. Do you have company?"

Before Lisa can take another sip of her coffee, someone called her attention. She looked up and saw a person pointing at the vacant space beside her. The woman has a long hazelnut hair with wavy ends. She's wearing a suspender skirt strap dress and a white off-shoulder blouse. Lisa shook her head without taking her eyes off the stranger.

Who would say no to this type of beauty?

"Thanks!" The woman sat beside Lisa.

Lisa gestured a "you're welcome" bow. Although the stranger has a friendly aura, Lisa isn't in the mood for little talk now. Unfortunately, seeing this woman made Lisa miss Jennie even more. That woman and Jennie have somehow the same fashion style; the hair, the dress, the shoes, except for the height that Jennie had seemed to lack.

"Oooh, it's really cold today, huh?" The woman spoke again, rubbing her palms against her arms.

Since it's just the two of them on that bench, Lisa knew that question was intended for her. "Y-yeah, that's what I love about this season."

"You don't seem from here," said the woman, crossing her legs. The friendly aura and the cheerful mood that hangs around her is something welcoming for a stranger. "Where are you from?"

"Bangkok, but I work and live in Korea, you?"

"Really? Where in Korea?"

Lisa was a bit confused by the woman's reaction. "Seoul?" It turned out to a question instead of a statement.

"Are you serious?"

"Yeah, why?"

"I live in Hongdae, I own a flower shop there! The woman exclaimed, smiling.

Lisa's eyes widened. "Oh, c'mon..."

"I'm not lying!"

Lisa laughed to her surprise. "Is Seoul too big for us that we have to meet here in Taipei instead?"

"Maybe Seoul is too crowded for us. Who knows, we might have been passing by each other but never noticed it."

Lisa shook her head and shrugged. "Well, it's.. it's just something."

"It's not something," said the woman, beaming at her. "It is called serendipity." The woman held out her hand to introduce herself. "I'm Krystal by the way."

Lisa had to shift her coffee to her left hand to free her right hand. "I'm Lisa."

"Well, it's nice to meet you, Lisa. You're here for vacation?"

"Hm, sort of. I'm just visiting my dad for New Year's Eve celebration."

"Then why are you strolling around here at this hour? You should be spending the day with your old man."

Although the question may seem to be personal, Krystal's way of talking made it impossible for Lisa to resist answering.

"Unfortunately, my old man is busy with his clients even today."

"Oh, what a workaholic daddy you have there."

Lisa chuckled. "Yeah. How about you, you're here for vacation too?"

"Not sure if you can call it a vacation, but yeah..."

"You alone?"

"Yup."

Lisa hummed in response. She felt the urge to ask more but doesn't want to sound like a nosy person.

"Is this your first time here?" asked Krystal.

"I've been in Taiwan twice but this is the first time I went to this area. You?"

"Not the first time. For the last six years, I've been going to this exact place every 31st of December."

"Wow. Something special here?"

"This is the exact place where I met my boyfriend," came the response. "He was sitting on your spot now and I was sitting here. It happened 31st of December six years ago. We became an official couple the year after. It became our routine to go here every end of the year because this is where it all started."

"Oh. That's nice. Is he with you now?"

Krystal shook her head slowly. "Well, this is the second time I went here alone... He can't make it anymore."

"You guys.. sort of.. split up..?"

Krystal forced a smile. "I wish we did, but it's not that way..."

The answer just got Lisa more interested. She felt like maybe Krystal is a lost soul that needs someone to talk to now. "Hey, I know we just met but I'm all ears in case you want to talk about it."

Krystal's face looked relieved to hear that. "I'm not sure if I've told you this already but I am a florist. Being a florist, my passion is to prepare the best

flower arrangement to any important events in somebody's life. Of course, my biggest dream is to design flowers for my wedding --- our wedding."

Lisa didn't say anything, anticipating the other girl to continue the her story.

"It's just that it never occurred to me that I'll be the one who'll prepare the flowers for..." Krystal intentionally paused for a moment as if she's trying to get more courage to say it. "...his funeral."

Lisa felt a sudden ache in her heart. She recalled how her dad was so depressed when her mom died. Although she was too young that time to remember all the details but the pain she saw in her father's eyes is kept in her memory.

"I... I'm sorry."

"Don't worry about it," said Krystal, hitting Lisa playfully on the arm. "It's been two years now since he left. I'm okay now, much better compared to last year."

"I can't say that I know exactly how you felt but I've lost my mom too so I kinda understand how tough it is when a loved one leaves us," said Lisa trying to console.

"Yeah, it's tormenting. The pain is... Is just unbearable..." Krystal wrinkled her nose up as if remembering how she went through. "It was really hard to get over him, you know?"

"Then why do you keep on coming back here if this place is full of his memories?"

Krystal brought her hands to her lap and fiddled with it. "We were together for two years before that fateful accident happened. And it feels like I'm betraying him if I won't come here anymore."

Lisa let out a loud sigh as she stared blankly at the horizon. No matter how much she tried to take the gloomy mood off her she's still feeling what Kystal has felt for the loss she had.

"But yeah, I'm okay now," said Krystal cheerfully. She noticed Lisa's melancholic mood because of her story. "I just went here today to officially say goodbye to him, to the memories we had here. I'm moving on now. It's just somehow ironic that on the last day I pledge to go here, to formally bid farewell to him, I found you."

"Huh?"

"Don't get me wrong here, okay? It's just that.. you know.. you somehow reminded me of him," Krystal confessed.

Lisa was fazed to say anything.

The funny thing about it is you are reminding me someone too.

Krystal continued. "I don't know why I'm even telling you this, but yeah, you may not look exactly alike, but you have the same aura. The way you held your coffee, the way you were seated when I saw you earlier, that sunglasses you wear, all of those just reminds me of him."

"Okay.. so.. should I just buzz off now because I just heard that you already want to say goodbye to him?" said Lisa, pretending to stand up.

Krystal stifled a laugh. "Crazy! That's not what I meant!"

"But how can you forget him if you're talking to a stranger who reminds you of him?" asked Lisa, chuckling.

"Hmm. How should I explain this?" Krystal brought her hand to her chin. "It's just that I feel like we're destined to meet her today."

"O-kay..." Lisa was still not sure what it meant.

"You see, going here alone, what are the odds of me finding some random stranger that reminds of my previous boyfriend?" asked Krystal. "You could have gone to this place a bit later and not meet me. Or maybe I could've gone here a bit earlier and sat with another person instead. But then, of all the time we have in 24 hours of our days, both of us had chosen this time to go here."

Lisa bent her head right. "Well.. that's.. an accident.."

"No way!" Krystal punched Lisa in the arm. "Now you're talking like him already. He said that our meeting was an accident."

Lisa smirked in response. She's relieved to see that Krystal is somehow over now with her grieving.

"There are no accidents, Lisa. Everything happens because they are destined to happen. We may not know it for now but there is a reason why we met here today," explained Krystal.

Lisa's eyes lit up to her realization. "Yeah, serendipity like you said."

Krystal shifted her crossed legs. "You know, this what I love about talking to strangers. You can share anything about yourself without worrying how they'll think of you later."

"I couldn't agree more," said Lisa. "I used to travel a lot before and I know what you're trying to point out."

Even they just met today, their conversation made them feel like they've known each other for a long time. Two people, for some undefined purposes, have found their way to fulfill their yet unknown roles to each other.

"So how about you, any issues you wanna share?" Krystal nudged Lisa.

Lisa saw Krystal's hopeful face for a touching story from her. Although she's entertaining the idea of telling this stranger what's on her mind, her face reflected a bit of hesitation.

"Come on, tell me. I just did all the talking earlier. Don't worry, I won't tell anyone about your secret." Krystal whispered.

Lisa smiled at the joke. She shook her head uncertainty. "I don't know."

"Ugh. You're so unfair." Krystal groaned and pouted her lips.

Lisa laughed when she saw Krystal's child like expression.

At some point, she really is just like Jennie.

The truth is she really wanted to have someone she could express all her thoughts about Jennie freely. Meeting Krystal could mean that maybe that someone is her.

"Fine."

"Yipee!" Krystal clapped her hands for winning the conversation.

This time Lisa turned her body to face Krystal, her arms were relaxed at the backrest. "Okay.. well.. there's this girl.."

Even Lisa haven't finished her sentence yet, Krystal's expression seemed to change to a Mona Lisa smile. "And?"

"And I just.. I just recently realized that.. that I'm in love with her."

Krystal brought her fingers to her chin. "Okay. I think we should give that girl a name."

"Her name is... Jennie..." Just mentioning the name gives Lisa a sudden sugar rush in her heart.

"Okay, so are you 'friends' with Jennie?" Krystal's hand signed quotation on the word friends.

"Yeah, we're c-close, I think."

"Is she aware of your feelings for her?" asked Krystal. She saw Lisa's lips curved upwards while her head is saying no. "Ah. I see. So that's the problem."

"Yeah, exactly." Lisa admitted, looking down at her coffee.

"Can't you just confess to her?"

"Nah, I can't do that. I'm not even sure if she's feeling the same thing for me. In fact, I don't think she's open to having a relationship with someone like me," said Lisa, pointing out the main issue.

"Oh, come on. I won't believe her if she would say that she doesn't have a crush on you. Seriously, with that look of yours, I'm pretty sure she's attracted to you."

Although it may seem impossible, Lisa's face shone with joy with what she heard. "I love what I'm hearing now, really, but Jennie... she's different, she's straight."

"But you said you were close, right?"

"Yeah, but I'm not sure if she thinks the same way. It's just probably me, you know, having this kinds of thoughts."

Krystal saw how this new friend of hers look sad with the one-sided affection. "What is she like?"

Lisa's eyes roamed around the area. "She's petite, she's beautiful, have a beautiful cat-like eyes, and her smile.. that gummy smile is just... Ahhh! I don't know."

"What do you like about her?"

"Uhhh.. everything?" Lisa feigned a smile. "I just love being around her. Every place become an extraordinary place when I'm with her."

"That's too mushy, Lisa, haha! You know what, I'd love to meet her."

"Huh?"

A lot of questions popped up in Lisa's head. How? When? Why? To think that they just met today, how are they going to do that?

"If it's okay with you, I said I'd like to meet her." Krystal reiterated.

"Why do you want to meet her?"

"Let me see her first then I'll tell you if she's into you or not."

Lisa's face lights up with the idea. "How would you know that?"

"Come on, Lisa. I know how another woman acts when she's in love, I've been there."

"But how are we going to meet?"

"Call me when you get back. I'll be flying back to Korea this afternoon."

Lisa felt Krystal's eagerness to help her. Even her intuition tells that she should trust Krystal. They gave out their numbers to each other and took a photo together.

"I'm not sure if I could bring her to you right away, it depends on the chances," said Lisa, still looking at her phone.

"No problem. Just call me, update me what's happening between the two of you. I'd love to see you both together." Krystal sounded hopeful.

Lisa's heart melted with that. She can't erase the grin on her face. "Thanks Krystal, it was nice meeting you here."

Back

December 31st - Seoul, Korea

After visiting her late dad's grave, Jennie and her mom went directly to her cousin's place. That's their usual routine during that time of the year. They used to live in that village until her dad died. They had to transfer house because her mom was having a hard time coping up, remembering every single memory of her dad in their previous abode.

"Jennie, come down now, lunch is ready."

"In a while, mom."

Jennie is currently lying on her cousin's bed, staring at the ceiling. It's weird. She never hated holidays before. But now it feels like a great sacrifice to do nothing and wait for two more days before she'd be busy again.

Sigh. I'm so bored.

"Jennie?"

Jennie turned her attention to the voice and she saw her cousin standing beside the door. "Hey, Dahyun."

"What's up?" Dahyun climbed on the bed and lay prone beside her.

"Nothing. I'm just.. bored."

"Why? We do this every year, why are you so bored today?"

Jennie played her fingers on her tummy while thinking of what to say. "I don't know. I just wish there's no holiday."

Dahyun laughed. "Hey doppelganger, tell me where my real cousin is."

Jennie's eyes almost disappeared when she laughed. "No seriously, I wish I had work today."

"Seriously? Do you hear what you're saying?" Dahyun's eyebrows crossed. She can't believe the things her cousin is saying now.

"I just feel bored. That's all."

"Hmm, is there something different in your office this year that doesn't there last year?"

"What do you mean?"

"Did you get a new crush or something?"

Jennie felt a sudden shiver in her spine. She had to laugh to let the shiver out. She can't understand why the first person that came to her mind with what Dahyun asked is Lisa.

"No, it's not crush, Dahyun."

That's so impossible.

"Not crush, but there is someone, right?" asked Dahyun skeptically.

"It's not like what you're thinking..."

Yeah, it's not like that.

Dahyun playfully hit Jennie's left arm. "Hey, are you keeping secrets from me? Are you in love, Jennie?"

The question made Jennie cringe even more. "I'm not, you, silly."

"Fine, fine, but I don't believe you."

Jennie stared at Dahyun and rolled her eyes. "Whatever."

"Well, speaking of crush.." said Dahyun, moving her face closer," I heard someone just got back here."

Jennie's mind is still lingering on the word crush and why Lisa was on her mind when she heard that. She didn't understand what Dahyun said.

"Hmm?"

"Do you remember your all-time-biggest-crush when you used to live her?" asked Dahyun.

Jennie was taken aback for a moment. She had to recollect thoughts first from her forgotten childhood memories. "What do you mean?"

"Gosh, Jennie, don't tell me you forgotten, Taehyung?"

"Taehyung?" Then suddenly, fragments from her childhood memories flashed in her mind instantly.

Jennie's family was living in that village until she was fourteen years old. Growing up as an only child, Jennie's favorite leisure is to play with her cousin, Dahyun, who happens to be an only child as well. They were very close to the point that they share everything. They play with the same toys, wear the same dresses, they have the same lunchbox, and they even went to the same school. Dahyun is like a sister and a best friend to her.

Just a few blocks from their house is a family friend with two sons who's ages are almost the same with her and Dahyun. The brothers are Hanbin and Taehyung. Hanbin is older one and the jolly type while Taehyung is the opposite. They used to play with each other when they were younger. But as they grew up they only see each other on family events or occasions.

Being a child, Jennie had developed a major crush on Taehyung since the day she can't remember. And since it's their families' tradition to have lunch altogether every New Year's Eve, the affection somehow remained even after she moved out from that place. She can't remember when exactly she got over her feelings for Taehyung. Maybe it went away when she entered college and got busy with school stuff. Plus, Taehyung's entire family

moved out from that village too because his dad was reassigned to a different location.

"Yeah, Hanbin and Taehyung, remember?" asked Dahyun.

"Y-yeah.." Jennie looked away. She didn't know how to handle the rush of nostalgia in her chest. "When did they get back here?"

"Just last week. I heard their dad wants to retire and it's planning on putting up a business. Both their sons are now working so they've got nothing much to worry about finances."

Jennie is a bit confused of what she's feeling. A while ago she was thinking about Lisa and now hearing Taehyung's name gave her the same feeling of what she's having before. Then she remembered something they usually do that day.

"Wait, don't tell me they're joining us for lunch?"

Dahyun's eyes crinkled. "Yes. They are waiting for us downstairs. I came here because your mom asked me to drag you down."

Jennie's eyes widened.

Oh, no.

Dahyun went down first after Jennie confirmed that she's about to go down too. The truth is she's not prepared. Thinking about Taehyung's presence in the same house made her fidgety. It went worse when she's by the stairs and is now hearing murmurs from men whose voices she hasn't heard in a long time.

She took a deep breath and few more steps down until she saw everyone.

"Oh, there you are, Jennie," her mom called right away, putting an arm on her shoulder and leading her to the couch where the members of the old family friend are sitting. "Look who's back."

Jennie glanced at the entire family but focused her eyes on the parents. She's seeing the brothers from her peripheral vision. "Good morning everyone." she said with a wai.

"Wow, is that really you, Jennie? You've grown so beautiful, darling," the mother said. "You used to be pretty when you're little but now you're just more beautiful."

Jennie forced a smile because she was too shy. "Thank you."

"Do you have a boyfriend, Jennie?" The father asked this time.

Her mom answered on her behalf, "None. Jennie has always been choosy in dating men. How about yours, are your sons still single?"

Oh mom please, don't do that.

Jennie wanted to exit the scene right away. She knows where the conversation is heading. Her mom is completely aware of her crush on Taehyung before.

"Hanbin is always not available. He's never been single the moment I allowed him to date," the father answered right away.

Hanbin threw a pillow to his dad. "Come on, pop, that's embarrassing!"

"Hahaha!" The father's laugh was so loud that it echoed in the whole house. Then he continued, Taehyung, on the other hand, is single. He just recently broke up with his long time girlfriend."

"This is awkward." muttered Taehyung, looking away.

Jennie was unaware that she's staring at Taehyung. It made her remember the reasons why she'd liked him before: the snobbish aura, his poker-faced expression, his dull eyes, his introverted personality, and whatever he does is everything for her before. Same old reasons but enough reasons for her to like him again.

Hanbin stood up and approached her. "Look at you, still beautiful. I remember having a crush on you when we were children," he said messing up her hair with a hand.

Hanbin's cheerful approach brought back the feeling when they were still little. Jennie smacked him in the stomach. "I knew it. That's why you keep teasing me."

Hanbin laughed, turning to his family quick and going back to Jennie after. "Yeah, but that went away immediately because you're so ill-tempered."

Jennie hit him on the arm this time. "Hmp!" (Pabebe amp! Lol)

Taehyung stood up as well and joined the conversation. He put his left arm on his brother's shoulder. "Don't listen to him, Jennie. He never had a steady crush. Up until now he always changes girlfriends from time to time."

"Man, you're ruining my moment here." Hanbin complain.

Jennie was giggling while looking at the brothers. Although there were changes, they are still the old playmates she used to have. "You guys just got taller but everything's just the same."

Both guys looked at her. Hanbin answered her back, "Yeah, you're still the same Jennie even in terms of height. Hahaha!"

The lunch went well for everyone. Everyone was laughing when they talked about the things that happened before, reminiscing about the used-to-be-kids that are grown-ups now. It was just as good as the old days. It was dusk when Taehyung's family bid them goodbye and wished them Happy New Year.

Jennie was so happy that day. The bored-to-death mood she had earlier disappeared with the presence of Taehyung's family. It didn't take her too long to admit that she's starting to fancy Taehyung again. He's just the same old Taehyung that she used to like before, plus her mother's obvious approval to pairing them up made it easier for Jennie to admit it to herself.

January 1st --- Seoul, Korea

It's already one o'clock in the morning and the ear-popping noise of firecrackers had subsided. Jennie was alone again in the room while her mom, aunt, and Dahyun are still busy chatting downstairs. She faked her tiredness to excuse herself. After having lunch earlier, everyone in her family, including Taehyung's, has been teasing and pairing them up.

She can't deny that at some point she likes Taehyung, but it doesn't mean that she wants them to be together. Taehyung, on the other hand, was just silent each time the topic between Jennie and him is raised.

Sigh. Just one more boring day before everything goes back to normal.

Even though she enjoyed the entire day, her cravings to go back to the office is still there when she's alone. She saw her old alien stuffed toy on the bed. It was the one she used to bring with her all the time when she was little. She had to leave the alien behind when they moved to another house because of Dahyun's request.

She grabbed the bear and stared at it for a moment. She couldn't explain why but aliens are now reminding her of Lisa. She hugged the alien and closed her eyes hoping sleep will come to her soon.

Mmmm-mmm. Mmmm-mmm. Mmmmmmmm-mmmmm.

Jennie's reverie was interrupted when she felt her phone vibrated under her pillow.

Who could be calling me at this hour?

She grabbed her phone to check who it is. After her eyes adjusted from the sudden light of the phone, she saw a long list of numbers displayed on her screen. The caller isn't in her contact lists yet.

She answered the phone with hesitation, "H-hello?"

"Hey, there."

Jennie aroused from the bed due to shock. Of all the people she knew, this is the least one she's expecting to call her.

"Jennie, are you there?"

"L-lisa, is that really you?"

"Yeah, were you expecting someone else?"

"No, no.." I'm just.. surprised.." Jennie felt her heartbeat thud under her hand. Surprisingly she was glad to hear Lisa's voice.

"Are you already sleeping? I apologize if I'm of any interruption. I'm gonna make this quick, don't worry."

"No, it's fine. I'm not sleeping yet."

"Oh, that a relief. Anyway, I'm just calling to greet you Happy New Year."

"Happy New Year, Lisa," said Jennie, grabbing the alien and looking at it.

"I just called Rosé, Kai, and the others earlier, just to greet them too."

Jennie felt disappointed. "Hmm. Why are you calling everyone?"

"Let's just say it's my way of thanking the important people that made my year complete."

Jennie's lips curved into a semi-smile. "You mean I'm one of those important people in your life?"

"Of course. It's not everyday that someone scolds me for having a burger for breakfast and then bring me breakfast the following day, right?"

Jennie couldn't control her laughter this time. She tried to keep it low though to make sure the people downstairs won't hear her.

"Who else are you going call after this?" she asked. Partly she's wondering if Lisa had also called Irene.

"No one. You're the last person I'll be calling today."

"Oh. I guess I'm the least important person in your 'important list', am I correct?"

"It's not like that. I'm pretty sure you're familiar with the line 'save the best for last', right?"

Jennie bit her lip and pinched the alien to prevent herself from producing any weird sound while on the phone. "Always the sweet-talker, Manoban."

"Hey, I'm not sweet talking. The truth is I was really planning to call you first but I don't have your number."

"Because you never asked for it. Too bad you're really slow, Lisa, always," said Jennie, pointing at the alien, pretending that is Lisa.

"I was afraid to ask for your number before because you might interpret it in another way. Remember you accused me of being flirtatious?"

"Then how did you get my number?"

"I have to call Rosé first and ask for it."

"Okay. And who did you call next after Rosé?"

"I called Kai, Suho, and then Tzuyu."

Jennie toppled the alien. "See? I was really last on your list. You didn't call me right after talking to Rosé."

Lisa's laughter echoed on the line. *"Okay, fine. I got your number from Rosé but I was afraid to call you right away."*

"Afraid? Why? I don't bite."

"Yeah. I know you don't. And you can't even if you want to. Maybe I'm just afraid that you might not be interested in talking to me right now."

"And where did you get that notion?"

"I don't know... It's a guess. Am I wrong?"

"Oh come one Lisa. You should be the first person to know that you're wrong. Have you forgotten that we talked alone in the resort? And in your place? Then we chatted ---" Jennie paused for a moment, remembering her embarrassment during that chat, "---then we also talked when we had breakfast, and now we're talking again. If I don't want to talk to you this things will never happen."

"Okay. That was a long explanation. Let me rephrase that one sentence. So you mean you love talking to me?"

Jennie gazed at the alien she's holding. Her eyes wondered with what she realized. "I... I guess I... I do.."

There was a sudden silence in another line.

"Lisa?" Jennie had to look at the screen of her phone to make sure that the line wasn't cut or disrupted.

"I'm still here."

"W-why do you sound so joyful now?"

"Oh, do I?"

"Yeah. Are you talking to somebody else there?"

"Nope. Just you."

"You're getting crazy." Jennie chuckled. "What time is it there now?"

"Well, You're an hour ahead of me so it's past one o'clock here."

"Then why aren't you sleeping yet?"

"I'm not yet sleepy, princess. Besides, work is still the day after tomorrow. I can just still up until morning."

Jennie had to admit that she somehow missed hearing that endearment from Lisa. "Are you having a good time there with your dad?"

"Yeah. We were with some of his friends who weren't with their families too. Although there's no one there with the same age, or at least close to mine, it was fun. How about you?"

"We're here at my cousin's place, got a little reunion with an old family friend. I had a great time too." Taehyung's face flashed in her mind.

"That's good to hear. What are you doing now?"

"I'm alone in my cousin's room, just lying here on the bed. You?"

"Same thing, Jennie."

"Are you sure it's okay for you to talk this long? You're making an international call, remember that." Jennie reminded the alien --- or Lisa rather.

"Don't work about it, my dad's got it covered," said Lisa, chuckling.

"Oh, so you're the big spender of you dad's wealth?"

"Haha. It's not like that. He's letting me do this because he knows I'm bored. I don't have friends here."

"Are you always like that every New Year's Eve?"

"Yeah, I just follow him wherever he is. Last year he's in Hong Kong. Hopefully next year he'll be there in Seoul."

"Oh."

Jennie's mind started to fly. She's looking at the alien that seems to be staring directly into her eyes. She wanted to ask whom Lisa might have called last year, but yeah, she knows who it is.

"Do you feel sleepy now?"

"Not yet.."

"Umm, I guess you're getting bored? We can just end the call if you want."

"It's not that, Lisa, I'm just wondering..."

"What?"

"Isn't it weird how we can talk about anything under the sun --- or the moon in this case --- without getting bored with each other?"

She heard Lisa smile. *"Is it something bad?"*

"No, it's not bad, it's just.... weird."

"It's not weird for me."

"Well, for you maybe it isn't because you can just charm your way up to get all those girls to talk to you. But for me, this isn't what I normally do," said Jennie.

"If this is beyond what you normally do then I am honored to be part of this outside-the-normal-thing that you enjoy right now."

"Still it's weird."

"When you say weird, do you mean something good or what?"

"I don't know. My presumption is it's because of the things that happened lately. Here we are getting closer to each other, you know. Maybe I'm just comfortable being around you, reason that I enjoy talking to you."

"That's reasonable, yeah."

"However, there's a part in me that wonders if I've been just affected by your sweet talking. Maybe it's just you. Your charm might have the same effect on every girl."

"Woah woah woah! I did not seduce you if that's what your pointing out."

Jennie strangled the alien. "That's not what I meant, crazy!"

Lisa laughed. *"Well, you're saying it like I do this all the time, to everyone, intentionally."*

"Isn't this what you really do? You see, Lisa, I'm just one of your victims," Jennie joked.

Lisa laughed again. *"For your information Miss Jennie Ruby Jane Kim, I am not doing this thing to everyone. Okay, so I have lots of acquaintances, yes. But this thing that we do now, 'this', this isn't happening all the time. You might not believe it but you're the only person right now that I love to talk to in this way."*

For a writer like Jennie, these are one of the rare cases when she felt that something's wrong with her. Articulacy is her forte, both in oral and writing. But this time her mind is having difficulties finding the right words to say.

Isn't it amazing how the person on the other end of the line has the ability to mute her once in a while? Although she can't describe the mix emotion she's feeling right now, one thing is definite at the moment: she's overjoyed with what she heard. It's like she's been given an assurance that Lisa is only enjoying that kind of conversation with her alone.

Before Jennie could get a chance to speak she hear footsteps in the hallway outside leading to her door. She assumed it's Dahyun.

"Jennie?"

"Lisa, I'm sorry, I have to go. My cousin's coming here now."

Oh, Dahyun. So wrong timing!

"Oh. No worries. I guess I'll see you on Monday."

"Yes, Monday. Bye now, Lisa." Jennie hung up the phone immediately.

Dahyun went to the room finding out that her expectation was correct --- Jennie is already sleeping. Little did she know that her cousin is only faking it.

Jennie tightened her hug on the stuffed toy alien, still remembering the last sentences Lisa told her. She hid her face under the alien and smiled.

I hate you, Lisa. I hate you.

Couple

"Yup, I'm already here in the office," Lisa confirmed after putting her headsets on. She pushed the car door closed and enabled the alarm.

"Somebody's too early for the office today, huh? It's only 7:17 on my watch."

"I know, but my body was up early, Krystal. I don't even know why." Lisa continued walking towards the exit of the parking lot.

"Pssh. You're just excited to see her..."

"I guess I am." Lisa giggled. She feels lucky to find someone whom she can confide everything about Jennie. It's easier for her to tell Krystal about it since they don't have common friends. The last thing she wants to happen is for Jennie to find out about her true feelings.

"Do you think she'll like your new hairstyle?"

"I don't know," said Lisa, fixing the bucket hat on her head. "I'm just afraid that she won't talk to me if I won't do what she says."

"Oh, come on, Lisa. She's not serious about that, trust me."

Lisa had her hair short. "I just hope you're right. Anyway, it doesn't matter if she had requested this or not, I really like my hair this way."

"Besides, it's a good way to start the year, right? I can't wait to see you, Lisa. I wonder how you look now."

"Don't worry, I'll visit you one of these days," said Lisa, stepping into the elevator. She pressed 17 on the floor panel.

"I hope you'll bring along a friend of yours when you do that."

"Haha. I can't promise you that but I'll try."

"I want you to observe her reaction when she sees you, okay? Describe it to me."

"Is that really necessary?" asked Lisa, gazing up at the floor signal.

B2...

B1...

1...

The elevator stopped on the first floor. Lisa moved aside to give space to anyone who's about to enter.

"It's for your own benefit, Lisa. If you could relay her exact reaction to me I can give you a hint of her thoughts."

Lisa was still smiling ear to ear when the door swung open. Her smile faded when she saw the person behind the door. Their eyes met for a second, turning away immediately.

The person is wearing a white blouse with a black ribbon lace, partnered with black skirt. Lisa was so mesmerized that she had to shift her eyes away because she's feeling conscious. The person, on the other hand, was also obviously shocked to see Lisa in the elevator.

The person stayed in Lisa's opposite direction. The awkwardness filled the area. Isn't it weird how an elevator with a capacity of 15 or more people can be too crowded for it's two passengers right now?

"Lisa, are you still there?"

Lisa didn't realize that she had forgotten about Krystal. "Yeah, I'm sorry. The line was jammed."

"Can you hear me now?"

"Yup, loud and clear."

"Can you give me Jennie's full name? I'll try to search her on social media. I'm really curious about her looks."

"Uhm, Krystal, I can't do that."

"Huh? Why? I'm just asking for a name."

"Exactly. I can't give it now."

"And why is that?"

Lisa took a deep breath and looked around the elevator, trying to avoid eye contact with her fellow passenger.

"Here."

"Huh?"

"I said, HERE."

"Who's there?"

"My friend."

"Your friend? Who?" Then Krystal finally got it. *"What? Jennie is in the elevator with you?"*

"Exactly, Krystal. Bravo." Lisa looked around to check Jennie's reflection on the mirrored wall, thinking if the latter can hear the conversation even if she's on headset.

"Oh, really? Are you two alone there?"

"Yup." *And this is awkward.*

"Then why don't you her and kiss her?"

"Ugh! You're crazy, Krystal, crazy!" A sudden emotion rush through her chest made Lisa react so hard.

"I'm just kidding. You're overreacting. Haha! Why do I have the feeling that you're already blushing?"

Lisa had no chance to defend herself, and yes, she's blushing. She leaned herself on the wall, defeated. "Oh, Krystal...."

"How does she look today?"

"Stunning. Beautiful. Always. What's new?"

"Is she looking at you now?"

"Mmm. I don't think so."

"So, what's was her initial reaction when she saw you?"

Lisa brought a hand to her face to somehow cover the feeling of being exposed. "I didn't get much of it, but we're both surprised."

"Then why don't you talk to her now, greet her."

"Ugh! I can't, Krystal."

"You're friends, right? You don't need a reason to greet each other."

"I know.. but, I'm shy."

"Ugh! You're so slow, Lisa. How about her, did she greet you?"

"No, I told you ---- surprised, right?"

"Not even a gesture to say, 'hey'?"

"I'm not sure, Krys. Even if she did, I wouldn't have noticed it because I was.. you know.." Lisa's eyes wandered around. But just like a metal that's always being pulled by a magnet, she can't help but look at Jennie from

time to time. She turned away immediately when she saw Jennie's face on the mirrored wall.

Ugh. Why do you have to be so beautiful.

"Okay, I guess I have to exit the scene now."

"Huh? Why?"

"You can't make a move if you're talking to me."

"Do I really have to make a move now?"

Lisa realized that she said it aloud. Her initial gesture was to check on Jennie's reaction. To her surprise, Jennie was already looking at her. Their eyes met through the mirror reflection.

"Just enjoy your day, okay? Just call me or I'll call you soon. I gotta go. Goodluck!"

Krystal hung up the phone immediately.

Oh, Krystal.

Lisa felt nervous. The elevator is currently on the tenth floor and Jennie and she are on the expressway straight to the 17th floor because there are no people yet that early.

Lisa removed her headset to somehow inform Jennie that she's over with her phone conversation. "Hey..." she called.

Jennie's lips lined a smile when she turned. "Hi, Lisa..."

Lisa almost melted. "You're early, huh?"

"Yeah, I woke up early today."

Lisa nods before saying, "Me too."

There was a moment of silence. Lisa wanted to say she missed Jennie however she's not sure how the latter would take it.

"So, you.." there was a bit of shyness in Jennie's tone, "you got a haircut."

Lisa felt shy and scratched the back of her neck. "Yeah.. well.. the boss asked me to."

Jennie laughed softly. "Your boss is a bit demanding."

"Slight. But what can I do, that's her command."

"What a difficult boss you have there."

"Oh, I'm glad you mentioned it. Yeah, she's difficult."

Jennie giggled again.

"Do you think the boss will like it?" asked Lisa.

Before Jennie gets the chance to even start saying something, the elevator door opened. Jennie went out first and Lisa followed her.

Lisa was a bit disappointed to see Jennie walk directly to her station. Lisa walked straight to her department too. She isn't sure if Jennie is in the mood for talk now.

"Lisa..."

Lisa was a bit far already when she heard the call. She turned around and saw the petite lady still standing in front of her terminal.

"Could you take off your hat for a sec?" Jennie asked. Without having any idea why, Lisa obeyed. Jennie folded her arms while observing her. "Hmm. I don't think your boss will like your hair now."

Lisa dropped her gaze at the hat in her hand, feeling nervous.

Seeing Lisa's expression drew a smile on Jennie's face. "But I'm pretty sure she'll love it."

That immediately brought a wide smile on Lisa's face. She shook the hat up and down while her eyes were darting around the area.

She turned her eyes back to Jennie and put her bucket hat back. She waved her hand as she turned around to walk towards her department. She was so happy that she felt like humming her way there.

YES!!! She loves it! She loves it! Eee!

Jennie can't get the smile off her face either. She couldn't believe that Lisa did that for her.

Although a bucket hat was worn, there's no way Jennie won't notice the difference in Lisa's hair because she'd somehow memorized the latter's physical appearance.

She was surprised to see Lisa earlier because of two reasons: first, she was not really expecting Lisa do to her request, considering that Irene wanted it longer; second, she's caught unguarded because Lisa was undeniably irresistible and more striking with her new hairstyle.

That thought froze Jennie. She glanced at the graphic department's direction, remembering the conversation she had with Dahyun last week.

But then, she immediately dismissed the idea. It's impossible. She knows how it feels to have a crush, to like someone. And what she felt with Taehyung before is different than what she's feeling for Lisa. Lisa could be just a close friend, a special friend who happens to be really beautiful and handsome with her new haircut.

Kling!

Jennie smiled when she heard the chat message notification. There's nobody else in the office yet except for the two of them. She surely knows whom the chat came from.

"Hey boss, it's still early. Want to grab coffee downstairs?"

Jennie smiled at the new endearment and replied. *"Yeah, sure. Pick me here whenever you're ready."*

Friday

As Jennie had expected, the fan girls went crazier this time. Jennie was not sure anymore if pushing Lisa to get a new haircut is a good idea or not. A lot of them were visiting the graphics department lately. And according to Rosé, there were even new recruits in Lisa's fanclub.

It's already past five o'clock in the afternoon and most people are excited to go home for the weekend. Jennie is still in her terminal doing some minor work. She's already done for the day however she was hoping that Lisa or Rosé will ask her to go out again for a little party like last time.

Ever since that night happened, Jennie's weekend started to get boring. The only thing she's excited about the weekend is the fact that she doesn't need to wake up early. Since it's Friday, and it's going to be a hell of two more days before Monday, she was somehow expecting to have a little bonding this time before she goes home.

"Hey, Jen. Did Lisa go home already?" asked Suho, fixing his things.

"I dunno. I'm not her keeper." She answered with a shrug.

Although they have been really close lately, it is not something that they share in the office. They don't talk that much when people are around. It's like they had a silent rule to keep their friendship in between them. There was no agreement about it. It just started rolling out like that. It's not like they're going to deny it but they don't want it to make it too obvious either, especially on Jennie's part who doesn't want to be pissed by the fan girls.

"I know you're not her keeper but why are you acting so defensive?" asked Suho, hooking his bag on his shoulder.

"Because I don't know anything about her whereabouts. I'm not her girlfriend, Suho."

Suho got confused. "Hey, I'm just asking if you happen to notice Lisa. What does it have to do with being her girlfriend? Besides, you don't need to be her girlfriend to notice if she left or not."

"Ugh! Fine! What is this about anyway?"

"It's for our February project. I've printed the materials and sent her the soft copy. She needs to get this copies," said Suho, raising some papers. "I tried to chat her but she's been idle for fifteen minutes now."

"Then just bring materials to her station then leave."

"I can't, Jen. My boyfriend is already downstairs. He doesn't want me to keep him waiting."

Jennie smiled. "If your boyfriend cannot wait for you for another five minutes then you should dump him."

"Hmp! It's easy for you to say that. Unlike you, it's not everyday I get someone to like me the way I am."

"Fine. I'll bring them." The truth is, Jennie just saw it as an opportunity to go to Lisa's department.

"Really? Hihhi! Oh, Jennie, you're so great!" Suho came close to give Jennie a peck on the cheek. "You're so beautiful. I really love you girl. Mwaaah!"

"Okay, okay. Enjoy your date now."

"Will surely, Jen! Thanks!" Suho hastily went out of the area.

Graphics Department

No one is in the room except for Kai. Jennie walked up straight to him.
"Hey, where are the others?"

"Oh, hello there, Jen." Kai stood up halfway but went back to sitting. "They already left. How can I help you?"

She raised the documents and said, "Suho wants Lisa to have this."

"Oh. Let me take care of those." Kai placed the papers beside his computer.

Jennie looked around the area and saw Lisa's things still on her table. "Lisa hasn't left yet?"

"She was called by the management. The photographer called in sick today and the artists are arriving anytime now."

Jennie leaned on the table and folded her arms on her chest. "She's gonna take pictures today?"

"Yeah. It was an emergency call."

"That's nice. So how's your Friday?"

"As usual, busy. There are too many demands for February issues, you know, Valentine's is coming."

"I heard you've been receiving lots of visitors lately?" asked Jennie. Her main purpose is to find out what the fangirls are doing when they are visiting Lisa.

Kai laughed. "Oh, so you noticed it too?"

"Yeah, it's too obvious. I mean, Rosé has been feeding me with what she sees in the hallway."

"It's all Lisa's fault, you know, and that boss of hers."

"Her boss?"

"Yeah. I heard some of the girls asked what's with the haircut and all she says is that it was a request from her boss."

Jennie secretly giggled at that. She couldn't believe that Lisa is telling that to her fangirls.

"She didn't clarify if that boss is a girlfriend or what. Those girls are so envious of her." Kai continued.

Jennie pressed her lips together to control her smile. "Maybe it's a special friend of hers."

"Special friend? I don't buy that, Jen."

"Why?"

"I don't think it's just a friend. I'm pretty sure that it's more than that."

"More like what?"

"Well, you know. It's probably Lisa's girlfriend."

Jennie suddenly felt choked. "W-why do you think so?"

"Girlfriends are those who usually make that kind of requests. And for Lisa to obey it, I don't think that woman is just a friend."

Jennie felt relieved that Kai was busy on his computer. She's not sure if she's really blushing but she felt her face getting warm.

"Just their luck," said Kai, pertaining to the fan girls, "somebody has already won over Lisa's heart."

"What's the photoshoot again for, the one that Lisa's on right now?" Jennie asked immediately to change the topic. She can no longer handle the pressure in her chest.

"It's February issue, Valentine's special. They can't cancel the shoot today because the artists are very busy," Kai handed the outline of the magazine.

"Who are the artists?" asked Jennie, relieved that her heart beat rate is returning to normal.

"I'm not sure. Lisa and I haven't looked at the outline yet. But based on what I heard it'll be a couple. The theme for the next month's issue is entitled "The Couple."

Jennie ran through the pages of the outline. She scanned the pages one by one.

Article...

Hearts...

Flowers...

Chocolates...

Weddings...

Her eyes widened when she saw the last page. "Oh my ---"

"What's that?"

"Where's the photoshoot happening?"

"Uh, it's in the usual room on the 23rd floor. Why?"

"Nothing. I have to go. Thanks, Kai." Jennie left the outline on the table and hurried outside.

Kai was still clueless with what Jennie had seen. He checked the last pages of the outline and saw the artists pictures and names.

Irene and Kyungsoo: Singapore model couple.

23rd Floor --- Photo Shoot Room

Lisa was getting ready for the shoot. She's adjusting the camera settings while waiting for the artists. She heard they arrived fifteen minutes ago and are currently retouching their make-up.

"Hi!" A good looking guy approached her. Based on his looks, Lisa knew that he's one of the models. "I assumed you're the photographer?" He pointed the camera hanging around Lisa's neck.

Lisa smiled and stretched out her hand for a shake. "Yeah. I'm Lisa."

"I'm Kyungsoo." The angelic-faced-model introduced himself. "Nice meeting you."

They shook hands. Lisa felt at ease. Kyungsoo's aura is very friendly.

Kyungsoo squinted his eyes and stared at Lisa for a moment. "Are you sure you're just taking pictures here? I really believe you're more qualified to be a model."

Lisa laughed at the compliment. "Now you're kidding me."

"No, I'm serious, really. You're more handsome than I am."

"Haha. Thank you tho, that's too much compliment." Lisa tapped Kyungsoo on the shoulder. "So, are you guys ready?"

"Yeah, yeah. I'm pretty excited. This is the first photo shoot for a magazine I'll do here in Korea."

"Oh, really? Why tho?"

"My modeling career began in Singapore."

Lisa remembered something with that. "Oh, really?"

Before Kyungsoo could speak, his eyes shifted to the woman behind Lisa who's approaching them.

"Hey, Soo. I'm ready now. Let's get started," the woman spoke.

Dug! Dug!

Lisa furrowed her eyebrows. She felt her heartbeat rose. She knew that voice very well. She could not be mistaken.

"Oh, there you are, Irene." Kyungsoo excused himself to approached his co-model. "Come here. I'd like you to meet our dazzling photographer."

Lisa turned around and saw how Kyungsoo put his arm around Irene's waist to assist her. Irene raised her head and the beautiful smile on her face faded when she met eyes with their photographer. The time stood still.

Tik... Tok...

Tik... Tok...

Tik... Tok...

"Uh, guys?" said Kyungsoo.

Irene broke the silence after getting back to her senses. "Lali..."

Lisa still hasn't fully recovered yet but felt compelled to respond, "Hi, Irene. Fancy meeting you here."

"Uhm, you two know each other?" asked Kyungsoo, feeling left behind by the two.

"Yeah. Lisa is a good friend of mine. She used to take my photos before when we were in college." Irene asserted.

Lisa smiled at the term Irene used.

Good friend. Yeah.

"Oh really? That's cool!" Kyungsoo's excitement interrupted by his ringing phone. He took it out from his pocket and glanced at the screen. "Poops. Excuse me, I need to take this."

Lisa and Irene were left alone after Kyungsoo walked away from them.

"You work her?" Irene started, getting a simple nod from Lisa as a response.
"I... Uh.. I didn't know you graduated already."

"Just last year." said Lisa, pretending to check something on the DSLR she's holding.

"Oh, that's good. So, you finally decided to go back to school."

"Yeah, I had to rethink my life."

Irene nodded. "So, who was with you during graduation?"

"My dad," said Lisa flatly. She remembered Irene promising her before, when they were still okay, to attend her graduation.

"Oh. I'm sorry I wasn't able to make it..."

"Don't worry. You're busy with your career. I perfectly understand that."

"By the way, my schedule is really crazy at the moment that's why I haven't gone back to your apartment yet."

"No worries. I'm kinda busy too."

"Oh." Irene looked around first and went back to Lisa. "Where were you this New Year's Eve?"

"Taiwan."

"Your dad is still traveling a lot, huh?"

"Yeah, I don't think he'll ever get tired of that," said Lisa, feigning a smile.

There was a moment of silence after that. They both knew that there's so much that they need to talk about but this isn't the right time and place for that conversation yet.

Lisa cannot hide her curiosity anymore, so she asked, "Is Kyungsoo your ---"

"Boyfriend, yes."

"Oh."

"I'm sorry that we have to meet this way. I was planning to introduce him to you sooner after we talk."

"No worries." Lisa fake a smile. She doesn't want to look pathetic.

"Are you okay, Lisa?"

Lisa closed her eyes for a second.

Ugh. Don't use that tone on me, Hyun.

The timbre of Irene's voice made her feel like she's talking to the old Irene -- the Irene who cared for her, her very own Hyun. That's how Irene talks to her during their alone time before. Hearing her talk like that somehow triggered something inside Lisa.

Are you okay, Lisa?

Are you okay, Lisa?

Are you okay, Lisa?

Suddenly, flashes of memories appeared on her mind. That was Irene's usual question whatever the situation is. Hearing that same old line from that same old person using that same old tone just made Lisa feel something she's not supposed to feel.

"Are you asking me if I'm jealous? I'm not," said Lisa, slightly chucking.

"Yeah, why would you be?" asked Irene.

Lisa felt her heart tightened. Hearing Irene's way of talking brought back memories when they were still close. It's like her feelings to the girl that has been buried inside just burst out from the depths.

Then she felt envious of Kyungsoo. Irene's smile was only hers before; her attention, her care, her affection, everything. All of those things now belong to the new guy. Lisa is now close to finally admitting it to herself. She knows she's losing the battle. She felt her knees getting weaker.

"Hey, honey. I've been looking everywhere for you."

Lisa snapped back to reality when somebody from behind clung to her left arm. She knew that voice. She turned her head to make sure she's not dreaming. Her eyes widened when she realized that it's for real.

Jennie?!

Girlfriend

What's this? What is she doing?

Lisa was undeniably shocked to see Jennie came out from nowhere. Even so, Jennie's presence gave her momentary solace. She was on her verge of falling from the cliff when Jennie came in to save her.

Jennie noticed Lisa's confusion. She held Lisa's face with her left hand. "Honey, are you okay?"

Honey? Me? Is this really happening?

Lisa peeked at Irene for a second just to see that the latter was a bit surprised too with Jennie's sudden appearance. Her eyes went back to Jennie. "H-how did you know I'm here?"

"I was looking for you and noticed that your IM status was idle, so I asked Kai," said Jennie, intertwining their hands.

Lisa loved the warmth of Jennie's hand on hers but the situation she's in right now doesn't permit her to enjoy it. Lisa turned her face to Irene. "Uh, Irene, this is ---"

"Jennie, right?" Irene's eyes is on Jennie. After getting a nod she shifted her eyes back to Lisa. "Have you forgotten your girlfriend and I have already met?"

Lisa's jaw dropped. The term girlfriend is too much for her to take. "Uh, yeah. I forgot, I'm sorry."

"Lisa has been forgetful lately because she's too busy," said Jennie, brushing a stray hair from Lisa's eyes. "Right, honey?"

Lisa felt Jennie squeeze her hand, asking her to ride along. "Yeah.. yeah."

"So, Irene, what do you think of Lisa's haircut now?" asked Jennie.

Irene studied her old friend for a moment and nodded. "It looks good on her, yeah." Then she turned to Lisa and asked, "Decided to finally cut your hair short?"

"Well.. it's her request," said Lisa, pointing at her *girlfriend*.

"Ahhh." Is all that Irene could utter. Her Expression was unreadable.

"Um, Irene, could you excuse us for a while? Jennie and I need to talk outside for a moment," said Lisa. She felt that she needs to discuss with Jennie about what's happening now.

"Sure. We'll just be right here."

Lisa smiled and dragged Jennie along outside the room.

The moment they were outside Lisa released Jennie's hand slowly. She wouldn't have done it but she doesn't want to give the slightest hint that she enjoys it.

"Are you alright?" asked Jennie, grasping her small hands on Lisa's shoulders.

Lisa evaluated herself for a second. "I think... I think I'm okay, yes."

"Are you sure?"

"Yeah, I'm cool."

Jennie dropped her hands to her side. "Okay, that's good to hear."

"H-how did you know I'm here again?" Asked Lisa, still confused.

"I was looking for you because I needed to hand over the materials from Suho. Kai told me you're here."

"Umm.. are you, are you aware that Irene is here?"

Jennie hummed to agree. "I saw Irene's picture on the outline Kai showed me."

Lisa furrowed her eyebrows.

Okay, so she went here because of that?

As if she could read what's on Lisa's mind, Jennie folded her arms on her chest and said, "I went here because I was worried. I was afraid that you'll be distracted if you saw them. It might affect you. It might affect your work. You lost the ability to speak the last time Irene showed up in your apartment."

"Oh." Lisa scratched a finger at the back of her neck, feeling embarrassed. "Thanks, Jen. Thanks for considering that."

"W-were you.. affected?" Asked Jennie.

Lisa looked around and pressed her lips together. "I don't know..."

"You don't know?" It just added Jennie's troubled mind. When she saw Irene and Kyungsoo's picture earlier she felt something strange. It's like a part in her is dying to know if Lisa is jealous of Kyungsoo, and a part in her doesn't want to hear Lisa say yes.

"I'm confused, Jen," said Lisa, looking down at her shoes. "I thought I won't be affected. But hearing Irene speak the way she speak to me before made me feel something."

Jennie felt nervous about it. "Something like?"

"Umm, it's hard to explain." Lisa shrugged. "I just felt nostalgic a while ago there. Suddenly it felt like everything is coming back to me."

"Including your feelings for her?"

"That I'm not sure anymore."

"Were you jealous of her boyfriend?" Jennie finally had the guts to ask that question. That's what she's been itching to know.

Lisa chuckled as she shakes her head. "The dude is handsome, Jen, really."

"So, what exactly did you feel when you saw them together?" Although it's not obvious, Jennie is getting a little impatient. All she wanted to know is if Lisa was jealous or not. The latter is just giving her vague answers and she's still clueless. It's just prolonging her curiosity, prolonging her agony.

"Um.. I don't really know."

"How come you don't know?"

"Well, because.. because everything went okay when you came in."

Jennie saw how Lisa avoided her eyes before saying that. She felt it was true. Although Lisa hasn't told her yet what she really wanted to know, that answer was far better than what she's expecting. With that just simple answer all her anxieties vanished. It calmed her curiosity. It calmed her mood.

Lisa continued, "I have to admit I felt something in there. But when I saw you I went back to my senses and felt like I don't give a damn about them anymore. I was almost falling there. I thought of giving in and accepting my defeat but then you came and everything just lightened up."

A small smile drew on Jennie's lips. "Did I come around at the right time?"

"Yeah," said Lisa, nodding. "I didn't know what to do before you showed up. I have to thank you for that, Jen."

"I'm relieved to hear that." Jennie gave out a sudden sweet smile.

Lisa had to catch her breath first before she could say anything. Seeing that smile gives her the feeling as if she's seeing it for the first time. The effect is just the same every single time.

"But I think you need to pretend that we're together. Irene might believe it." Lisa is trying her best not to smile because she loves the idea.

"Don't worry. Irene always thought that we're together, right? Let's just make it real."

"Huh?"

"What?"

"Did you just say that you want us to make it real?"

It's too late when Jennie realized what it meant. She scrunched up her face and said, "No, no. I... I mean, let's just make it *seem* like real."

"Oh." Lisa looked down on the floor again.

Okay, you're really being stupid now, Lisa. How dare you think it was a confession already!

The two looked away from each other for a while since the ambiance around them started to feel awkward.

Lisa stared at her left hand and traced her thumb on it. It suddenly felt empty after letting go of Jennie's hand.

"Jen, can I ask you something?"

"Yes."

"Why are you doing this?"

Jennie was caught unprepared for that. Truth is she doesn't know the reason herself. Her feet just dragged her there. She had to get some air first while mentally composing how she should state her reason.

"I just don't want her to think that you're not happy with your life because she's not with you. I want her to feel that you are complete and contented even without her."

Lisa bit her lower lip. She didn't know that Jennie cared for her to that extent. She's thankful that the latter cares for her that way. At some point, she's afraid that maybe that's the most attention Jennie could give her.

"You're happy, right?" asked Jennie.

"I am happy," said Lisa.

I'm happy being like this with you.

"Besides, it's a win-win situation for you. Who knows, you might get her back because of me."

"Don't tell me you're planning to make her jealous?"

Jennie traced her finger on Lisa's sleeves as if she's fixing something. "Not intentionally, but maybe. If she gets jealous then you know she's not over you yet."

"Are you sure you really want to do this?" Asked Lisa. She couldn't believe what she's hearing.

"The first time Irene and I met she already thought that we're dating, right?" asked Jennie. "And I seriously believe that there's no point in denying it. Let's just use that misconception to find out if she still has feelings for you."

"What if she won't get jealous?"

"Then it'll be clear that she's really over you. You can completely move on with your life."

"And what if she gets... jealous?"

Jennie hasn't really thought of that yet. One of the reasons she jumped into that situation is because she wants to help Lisa prove that she's better off without Irene. But the idea of Irene getting back to Lisa is something that her mind doesn't entertain yet.

"If she gets jealous then you'll get her back."

Lisa is confused with what she's feeling now. She knows, a hundred percent, that she loves Jennie. However, there's a part in her that still longs for Irene, and she doesn't know how to dominant that part is. What would she do if Irene wants to get back to her? She doesn't want to lose Jennie either.

"Consider it as a favor from a friend, Lisa, a favor from me." said Jennie.
"Let's just do this and get over with it. The sooner you'll find out what you really mean to her the sooner you'll know what to do next --- move on or be together again."

Lisa let out a loud sigh. "I'm more worried that you might not be comfortable doing this with me."

Jennie slapped Lisa's arm playfully. "Psh. You worry too much. Loosen up. In case you didn't know, I was a part of a drama club when I was a student."

"Oh...?"

"Don't tell me you don't want to do it with me?"

"That's not what I meant. I can do it, but we both know that it might involve some... you know. I just don't want you to feel uncomfortable around me because of that."

"If it just involves cuddling, touching, and clinging to each other, I don't mind that," said Jennie casually. "In case I haven't told you this yet, I'm very comfortable around you and things like that won't bother me."

Lisa felt there's no way out. Besides, Irene has already thought that they are together. Like Jennie said, it's a win-win situation for her.

"Anyway, it's just for a day. I guess it won't do this any harm," Lisa finally said.

"So, are we cool?" Jennie raised her fist for a fist bump.

"Yeah, cool." Lisa smiled as she bumps her closed fist to Jennie's. "Come on, let's go back inside."

"Ehrm.. ehrm.." Jennie cleared her throat. She stretched out her hand and said, "You're forgetting something, honey."

Lisa couldn't believe what she's hearing. "Oh, yeah. Sorry." She came close to Jennie and locked their hands, secretly smiling inside.

I could get used to this.

The two walked together hand in hand in the room. They saw Irene and Kyungsoo in the same spot where they were left earlier. Kyungsoo's face lit up upon seeing them. Based on his looks, Irene has already told him about Jennie.

"Look who's here!" he said, excited to see Lisa getting back with a beautiful woman.

Lisa can't control herself from smiling. She knew what Kyungsoo is thinking. "Hey, you guys ready?"

"Aren't you going to introduce her to us first?" asked Kyungsoo.

"Well, Irene already knows her. By the way, this is Jennie," said Lisa, then she turned to Jennie, "and Jennie, this is Kyungsoo. He's one of the models I'm taking pictures today. He's Irene's boyfriend."

Kyungsoo immediately offered his hands. "Nice meeting you, Jennie."

"Nice meeting you too."

"You're Lisa's girlfriend, right?"

"Y-yeah.." Jennie couldn't understand why but she felt shy this time thinking that they are officially pretending to be real.

"Hey, you're turning red," said Kyungsoo grinning.

Jennie smiled and buried her face against Lisa's sleeve. She tightened her grip on Lisa's hand.

"That's so cute." Kyungsoo turned to Lisa this time and nudged her. "You surely know which to pick, huh?"

"Uh... well..." Lisa trailed off, scratching her ear with her hand.

"Oh my, Lisa. You're blushing too. Hahaha! What a lovely couple we got here."

And so the photo shoot began. While watching Lisa take pictures, Jennie realized that this is Lisa's real passion. She can see how much the latter enjoys what she's doing now.

Irene and Kyungsoo, on the other hand, were very professional and easy to work with. Lisa asked them to do some sweet poses since the cover is for Valentine's. It was a smooth flowing shoot and it didn't take them long to finish.

After calling it a day, Lisa approached Jennie with the DSLR on her hand. "Hey, bored yet?"

Jennie shook her head. She's currently sitting on a chair, legs crossed, her head resting on one hand. "Nope, I enjoyed watching you guys. This is my first time to witness how magazine covers are done."

Lisa stretched her arms wide. "Welcome to my world. This is what I do ever since I was in college. Graphic designing was just a part of it, but this, this is the main course."

Jennie's stomach growls after hearing that. "Speaking of the main course, I'm getting hungry now." she said pouting her lips a bit.

Lisa can't find the courage to resist Jennie each time she acts like a baby. "What do you say about us grabbing a burger or something for dinner?"

"Burger again?" asked Jennie, frowning. "I thought I already told you to stay away from those kinds of foods?"

"Haha! I'm sorry," said Lisa, not sure if Jennie is just acting or not because it seemed real to her. "I totally forgot about that. Well, let's just go out for a dinner before I drive you home, what do you think?"

Jennie's face lit up. "Hmm. Dinner sounds good!"

"Where are you having dinner guys?" Kyungsoo approached them. "Thanks for the easy and fun photoshoot, Lisa," he said, shaking her hand.

"You guys made it easier, you both good," said Lisa, tapping Kyungsoo. "And as for Irene, well, we've worked together a lot way back in college, making things a lot easier for all of us."

Feeling really comfortable, Kyungsoo rested an elbow on Lisa's shoulder. "By the way, I heard you guys going out for dinner?"

"Yeah, the baby here is kinda hungry," said Lisa, pointing a finger at Jennie.

Jennie pressed her lips together. She felt something tickled her when Lisa called her that.

"Why don't we all go out for dinner?" said Irene, joining them.

Lisa knew what was coming next. She suddenly felt the initial instinct of protecting Jennie from Irene. "We'd love to, but Jennie needs to go home in an hour. She has some errands to do."

That's enough pretending for today.

"Don't tell me your planning on getting a burger for your girlfriend?" asked Irene. "I just heard that Jennie doesn't want you to eat burger anymore."

Kyungsoo laughed. "Oh, really? You don't allow Lisa eating burgers? That's sweet."

Jennie stood up from the chair and tucked her arm under Lisa's. "It's because she's always having that for breakfast. Very unhealthy. Tsk, tsk, tsk.."

Irene reached for Kyungsoo's arm to hold on it too. "So, you're into burgers this time? I remember you used to love noodles before."

Lisa noticed what Irene just did but didn't mind it. "Yeah, it's easier to get a burger than to prepare noodles."

Irene smirked. "Tsk... You never changed Lisa. You're still lazy."

Lisa felt Jennie's grip on her arm tightened.

"So, what about dinner? Are you guys coming with us or you're coming with us?" Kyungsoo invited them again.

"Let's all go together. It's not everyday we get to see each other like this. The last time Jennie and I met we barely talked, right?" Irene insisted.

This are the moments when Lisa feels like she's talking to the new Irene. She can't predict what's on Irene's mind anymore.

Lisa moved her head closer and whispered something to Jennie. "What do you think?"

"It's okay, I don't mind." Jennie whispered back.

"Are you sure?"

"Yeah. This meeting might not happen again. Let's just make the most out of it," said Jennie, gazing at everyone.

Lisa sighed. *Yeah, you're right, this might not happen again.*

"Well said, Jennie." Kyungsoo agreed.

"Where should we eat then?" asked Lisa.

"Wherever the ladies like. Do you have a place in mind?" asked Kyungsoo, turning to Irene.

Irene shrugged. "I'm not the best person to answer that kind of question. I think we should ask Lisa."

"Why me?" Lisa pointed at herself.

"Well, because I believe you're the one with the most sensitive taste buds in here?"

Jennie can't tell if her feelings are correct. Something inside tells her that Irene is eagerly pointing out all the personal things she knows about Lisa. She poked Lisa's ribs with her elbow. "What does she mean by that, honey?"

Lisa had to control her smile. She's still not used to hearing Jennie call her that. "You know that I often go out to eat at restaurants, right?" she asked, Jennie, waiting for a nod. "I kinda have tried eating all the major restaurants here in Korea."

"And mind you, she's very picky. Once she didn't like the taste of the food, she'll never go back to that place again," Irene added.

Jennie was in awe with Irene's confidence on Lisa's preference. It made her feel that something had really happened between this two. Irene surely knows a lot of things about Lisa and she's telling that in Jennie's face.

"Which is your favorite restaurant then?" Kyungsoo asked Lisa.

"I love going to Dining in Space. However, I don't think that's the right place for us tonight. I'd say we go to Hadongkwan. What do you think, Irene?" said Lisa.

Irene ran her fingers through her hair. "Yeah, Dining in Space has more romantic ambiance, Lis. I think it's more fitted for a dinner for two. Hadongkwan is a good idea, plus the view there is great."

"Alright, so it's Hadongkwan then," Lisa confirmed.

They separated on their way there as they have to travel by car. Although the conversation was short, Jennie has a feeling that Irene is indirectly

telling her that she cannot replace the relationship they had before. Irene is intentionally making her feel that she knows Lisa better more than Jennie does.

But then all of these were just a hunch. She's not sure yet. She needs more proof. But yeah, she knows that pretending to be Lisa's girlfriend gave her ticket to a silent war with Irene.

War

Hadongkwan Restaurant

The moment they arrived at the restaurant, Jennie noticed how the staff welcomed Lisa with big smiles. Most of them addressed the latter by her first name which made Jennie think that Lisa is a valued costumer in that place.

Most of the staff, especially ladies, were obviously captivated by their arrival. Some are looking at Kyungsoo, some are thrilled over Lisa. Jennie feels proud to walk beside Lisa at that moment with their hands intertwined. She can't help but smile to herself each time she sees some glare of disappointments from the female staffs.

Sorry ladies, she's mine tonight.

Jennie doesn't care if some of those staffs are already killing her in their minds because there is a bigger fish that she needs to deal with. She's not sure if Irene is deliberately doing it but she feels like Irene is competing with her in some ways, especially if it concerns Lisa.

They sat on the couch facing each other by pair. While waiting for their food to be served, the manager and the chef approached Lisa. Jennie noticed how glad the chef is to see Lisa there. From what she heard, Lisa hasn't shown in that restaurant for one month now. They even excused themselves to talk to Lisa alone.

"I'll be right back." Lisa squeezed Jennie's hand as she was about to get up.

"Sure, enjoy yourself," said Jennie. She felt like a baby when Lisa patted her head before leaving.

Kyungsoo stood up from his chair too. "Okay, excuse me for a while ladies, I need to make a call."

Both the ladies nodded. And just like that, Jennie and Irene were left alone at the table. They were silent, obviously feeling awkward at each other. Both are throwing quick glances at each other from time to time. Jennie knew that Irene was feeling what she's feeling. Pretending to be Lisa's girlfriend is not hard but being alone with Irene is really uncomfortable.

"It seems that the staffs here surely loves Lisa a lot." said Jennie, trying to start a little talk.

It made Irene smile. "If I'm not mistaken, Lisa always goes here at least twice or thrice a week. She's in love with the foods here. She always talks to those two each time we go here before."

Jennie took it down in her mental notepad. She noticed how Irene keeps on pointing out the things Lisa had done with her before.

"What do they usually talk about?"

"It's mostly about food and recipes, which I don't understand," said Irene, rolling her eyes. "They always try to get Lisa's point of view on the food. Sometimes it's the other way around, Lisa is asking them about the food."

Jennie got curious in the newfound information. "Why are they doing that?"

Irene's eyebrow rose. "Hmm. Didn't you know that Lisa is a good cook?"

"Really?" Jennie suddenly remember the breakfast she had with Lisa in the office pantry.

I told her that I always imagined myself being with someone who loves to cook. Oh my gosh!

"Yes, she loves cooking a lot. I'm surprised you haven't figured it out yet," said Irene, chuckling a little. "If it wasn't for her love of photography I think she'd get culinary in college instead. Don't tell me she hasn't cooked food for you yet?"

Jennie shook her head. "Well, she mentioned that she loves cooking but she only enjoys it if there is someone to share the food with. I've only gone to

her apartment once and haven't tasted her cooking yet."

"For real? How long have you been together again?" asked Irene, looking more surprised.

That was an abrupt question. Jennie wasn't prepared for an answer. "J-just recently."

Act natural, Jennie.

"Recently? As in just this recently?"

"Y-yeah..." Jennie hope that Irene won't ask Lisa the same questions because they might give contradicting answers.

"You mean, you're not official yet when I came to her apartment last December?" asked Irene.

"Not yet," said Jennie, shrugging. "I was just so drunk the night before after a little party. I passed out on our way home and she didn't know where my address is."

"So, Lisa wasn't lying when she told me you're not her girlfriend." Irene murmured to herself. "Where did you guys met again, in the office?"

"Yes, we're on the same floor. Just different departments," said Jennie, relating things as close as she can to reality.

"So, how was it? I assume there are other girls that are annoyingly trying to get close to her, right? Do you guys fight over that?"

Jennie smiled at the thought of the fan girls in the office. "There are some girls that are crazy about her. So far, none of them has gotten on my nerves yet."

"I admire your patience and understanding there." said Irene, smiling slightly. "One of the things I am so fond of Lisa is her admirable kindness. She easily gets along well with strangers, with everyone. The funny thing about it is, ironically, that's what I hate about her too."

Jennie chuckled realizing that she felt the same way somehow. "She can't just help being nice."

"Yeah, right? I don't understand how Lisa grew up like that."

For the first time since they met, Irene and Jennie have finally agreed on one thing.

"By the way, if you don't mind, I'd like to know how you two end up together. Did Lisa court you or something?" asked Irene.

Jennie's profession is really helpful during moments like this. Writing contents repeatedly for her clients had given her the ability to easily come up with an impromptu story.

"No. We never went into that formal courting process," said Jennie casually. "Lisa and I started out as good friends. And as time goes by, it grew deeper until everything was out of control. It didn't take long before we finally admitted to each other that what we're feeling is mutual. We decided to make it official when she called me on New Year's Eve."

Irene's mouth formed an O shape. Her brows creased slightly. Jennie knew that everything she said had struck Irene. She intentionally did that, relating their fake love story to what happened with Irene and Lisa because she wanted to find out what reaction she will get.

"How long have you known each other?"

"Five months."

Irene shifted her position on the chair, bringing her mouth against her closed fists. "Has Lisa told you about me?"

Jennie knew that a counter-attack was about to happen. "Yeah, she did. We talked about you that day you came to her apartment."

"What are the things she told you?"

"Well, about your special friendship with her," said Jennie, not wanting to lie. She wants Irene to know that she's completely aware of their past.

"Oh. Doesn't it bother you to know that and be with me now?"

"No, not really," said Jennie, smiling. "Lisa is very open on her thoughts about you."

"Do you have issues about how Lisa handles this?"

"I don't have problems with that because I know that Lisa is over you, Irene."

A smile slipped from Irene's face. "Oh, really?"

Jennie got confused with Irene's reaction. *Does she have alas card that she hasn't shown yet?*

Irene quickly run her fingers through her hair. "That made me think, Jennie."

"About?" Jennie's elbows were resting on the table. She closed her fists, anticipating for a hard blow.

"Don't get me wrong here, okay? I'm just wondering."

"Go ahead."

Irene made eye contact with a fork and played on it. "Well, it has been only more than a year since Lisa and I last saw each other. I'm pretty sure that you knew how long we stayed together in the past. Has she told you that?"

Jennie nodded. "Mmm-mmm."

"I'm thinking of the possibilities that could've happened if I'd come back a bit earlier."

"W-what do you mean?"

Irene arranged back the fork to its original setup before looking at Jennie. "Since you mentioned that you just got recently together, just like a week ago, the question that's been bothering my mind is, do you think you'd be together if I had shown to Lisa's apartment a month earlier?"

Jennie slowly moved her body away from the table to lean against the backrest. She didn't take her eyes away from Irene. The question was hard to answer: first, because JenLisa isn't real; second, because she knows that it might have been really a different story if Irene had come back to Lisa's life earlier.

Irene had surely paralyzed her with that question. Jennie saw her opponent's lips lined a smile of victory.

"Hey, what are you two chatting about?" said Lisa, approaching them in her best mood which eradicated the war ambiance in the area.

Jennie knew that she doesn't need to respond to Irene's question anymore. They knew themselves that whatever they've talked should stay just between the two of them. However, Jennie isn't sure why she feels uneasy with what Irene said. It bothered her. She cuddled Lisa's arm the moment the latter sat beside her.

Lisa noticed that something is strange in Jennie's mood. "Is my baby, okay?"

Instead of answering, Jennie nodded and embraced Lisa's hand with hers. Strangely, the warmth of that hand calmed her down. Her ears cannot refuse to adore the sound of Lisa's voice calling her baby, and this time with a hint of possession with the word 'my'.

"Are you sure?" Lisa asked her again with more sweetness in her voice. She even squeezed Jennie's hand.

That's enough to fix Jennie's mood. She nodded again and smiled sweetly, hooking her chin on Lisa's shoulder.

Kyungsoo came back and shortly. Over dinner, they had a little discussion about some random stuff like modeling, photography, Singapore, and some throwback memories from Irene and Lisa's college life.

"By the way guys, it's Irene's birthday next week. Do you want to go with us?" Kyungsoo is obviously enjoying Lisa and Jennie's company a lot that he's inviting them wherever they'd go.

"Where are you going?" asked Lisa.

"In Gampo Beach. We're going to take an off in Ramada Hotel & Resort Gyeongju."

"Do you guys want to come with us? It'll be next weekend." said Irene.

"Uhm, no. Sorry," said Lisa, turning to Jennie for a second and turning back to Kyungsoo and Irene again, "Jennie and I have plans too."

"Aw, that's too bad," said Kyungsoo, disappointed.

"Can't you just move the plan to some other time so you can go with us?" asked Irene. "Come on, Lisa. I haven't seen you for a year and you're gonna ignore me just like that?"

Jennie raised an eyebrow.

Lisa doesn't want to drag Jennie anymore into any of this. Whatever is between her and Irene, she knows they have to settle it for themselves. Moreover, she also feels that the acting they're doing is too much favor for Jennie. She doesn't want to look like she's just using that reason to take advantage of the situation.

"I'm sorry guys, can't cancel it."

"I guess we could come with them, Lisa," said Jennie out of the blue.

Lisa immediately turned to Jennie. "Are you sure?"

"Yeah, I haven't been there once. Besides, it's your old friend's birthday, right? You wouldn't want to miss celebrating it with her." Jennie turned to Irene, flashing a sly smile, signaling that the game is on.

Irene answered with a lopsided smile.

Lisa got confused. "But Jen ---"

"Oh, come on, Lisa. Jennie wants to go too, don't be a killjoy." said Irene.

"Yeah, let's go with them. It'll be just over the weekend," Jennie agreed.

Lisa couldn't believe what she's hearing, couldn't believe what's happening with the two girls. It's like they already talked about it.

"Jennie, this is not what we planned for," said Lisa, looking straight into Jennie's eyes, telepathically telling her that it is already outside what they've discussed earlier. Going with Irene and Kyungsoo will mean more acting for them.

"I know it's different with what we've planned but I want to go with them, Lisa." Jennie pouted like a child before touching Lisa's chin. "Please, please, can we?"

Lisa knew she cannot say no anymore. She turned her gaze to Kyungsoo and Irene and saw their triumphant grins.

They parted ways with Kyungsoo and Irene after dinner. Lisa is currently driving Jennie home, feeling worried because Jennie has been silent for a while now. She's trying to recall her acting earlier, asking herself if she overdid something that maybe made Jennie feel uncomfortable.

"Are you sure you really want to go with them to Gampo?" asked Lisa.

"Yeah, I told you, I haven't been there yet," said Jennie, eyes at the window.

"Maybe we could just go there some other time with the other people in the office?"

Jennie finally turned to her. "Why are you so afraid to be with Irene?"

Lisa felt that there is something wrong, she can't just determine what it is. She kept her eyes on the road and said, "It's not that I'm afraid, I'm just worried about you."

"Worried about me?" Jennie snorted. "Are you really worried about me or are you more worried about yourself?"

Lisa didn't respond. She doesn't know what Jennie is pointing out.

What's wrong with her? She was in good mood earlier, right?

Jennie let out a loud sigh. "If it really hurts you to see them together then I guess we can cancel the trip with them."

Lisa glanced at Jennie. "It's not about Irene. You're thinking the other way around."

"Then, who is this all about, me?"

"Yeah, it's all about you," said Lisa, still shifting her eyes back and forth to the road and Jennie.

"Okay." Jennie reclined on the backseat and looked out the window. She doesn't sound convinced.

"I'm worried about you," said Lisa, sighing. "Irene is a nosy person. I'm sure she'll ask you questions about me, about us. In addition to that, we still need to pretend that we're together if we go out with them. I don't want to drag you anymore with this things."

"Do you have issues with pretending? We seem to handled it well earlier, right?"

Yeah, it was good because I wasn't acting there, Lisa thought. "I just don't see the point why we still have to go with them."

"You'd want to go with them, Lisa, believe me. You're Hyun, she's jealous of me."

"Huh? Where did you get that?"

"I'm not definite about it, but yeah, the way she asked questions earlier, I'm pretty sure that our little acting affected her."

Lisa was lost for words. Although there's a part in her that still longs for Irene, she's sure that what she's feeling for Jennie is way greater than what she feels for her old friend. But seeing Jennie act like what she does now somehow hurts her.

"Could you do me a favor, Lisa?" Jennie spoke up. "Can we just go with them next week and settle your unfinished business with her? I really think that you and Irene need to talk and finalize everything."

Out of nowhere, Lisa's phone on the dashboard rang. Jennie discreetly peeked on the screen and saw numbers instead of a name.

Lisa answered the phone and put it in loudspeaker since she left her headsets at home. "Hello?"

"Hi, Lali. Where are you?"

"Oh, hey, Irene, what's up?" She threw a quick glance at Jennie who's still looking out the window. "I haven't seen you in like thirty minutes, right?"

Irene laughed. *"Good thing you haven't changed your number yet."*

"I'm surprised you still remember mine."

"Of course, Lisa, of course. By the way, I'm hearing some feedbacks, am I on loudspeaker?"

"Yup."

"Is Jennie still there?"

"Y-yes..."

"Oh, hi there, Jennie!"

"Hello, Irene!" Jennie's voice was back to being cheerful again.

"So, why are you calling?" asked Lisa.

Weird, is she changing moods like that all the time, or is it part of her acting?

"Well, Kyungsoo and I decided to visit Jisoo's bar tonight. Do you guys want to come over?"

Jennie signaled her hand no. She needs to go home now since it's getting late.

"Uhm, Jennie can't go there anymore, Hyun. Her mom is waiting for her," said Lisa *"Oh, that's too bad. Well, Jen, is it okay if Lisa will come with us after she drops you home?"*

"Yeah, sure. No problem. Just make sure she's not drinking and alcohol tonight. She still driving home," said Jennie in authoritative tone.

"Don't worry. I'll be the first person to scold her when she takes in alcohol."

"Thanks, Irene."

Lisa smiled to herself, amazed at Jennie's acting skills. "Okay. I'll be there in thirty minutes, JooHyun."

"Sure. Call me when you're here, I'll meet you in the lobby, okay?"

"Got it."

"Thanks, Jennie. I'll see you later, Lisa." After that, Irene hung up.

Just few minutes after the call they arrived in front of Jennie's house.

"Are you sure you're okay to go there alone?" asked Jennie while unbuckling her seatbelt.

"Don't worry, Jisoo is there, we'll have fun," said Lisa. "Besides, I don't want to bother you anymore for tonight."

"Okay. Just don't drink and drive, okay?"

"Yeah, I promise." Lisa raised her right hand.

Jennie was about to open the door on her side when she hesitated. "By the way, Lisa..." she paused and waited for the latter to look at her, "Irene believes that we're really together so don't do something stupid in there, okay?"

Lisa didn't get it. "W-what do you mean?"

"Could you be faithful to me at least if Irene is just watching?"

Lisa was speechless. Sometimes she doesn't know if they are just pretending because it feels like it's real.

"I just don't want her to think that you're not serious about me." said Jennie, looking away.

"Oh. I got it. Don't worry, Jen --- I mean, honey."

Jennie chuckled at that. "Hey, you better call me that more often when Irene is around. I'm telling you, she's jealous of me."

With pleasure, Jennie, with pleasure. Lisa just smiled at Jennie.

"Okay, so, thanks for the ride." Jennie motioned to open the door.

"Uhm.. Jennie?"

"Yes?"

"I... uh... I haven't thanked you yet for what you did today."

Jennie removed her hand from the knobbed and settled herself back on the chair. "Don't worry about it."

"I don't know why you are doing this, and I don't even want to ask why," said Lisa, avoiding Jennie's eyes. "I just want to thank you for everything. I appreciate it. I really do. Next week I'll try to settle everything with Irene. But I want you to keep in mind that we're not going there because of them. I want us to go there just to have fun, okay?"

A small smile drew on Jennie's lips. "Are you saying that you're taking me out like a date?"

Lisa felt choked. "Uh.. well.. call it whatever you like."

Jennie chuckled again. "Okay, I gotta go now. Take care, okay?"

"Yup. Enjoy your weekend."

"You too." Jennie opened the door halfway and stopped again. "Oh. I forgot something." She mumbled, closing the door again.

"What's that?"

Without saying anything, Jennie turned to Lisa and held her face with a hand. The proximity filled Lisa's nostrils with Jennie's sweet scent as the latter was leaning closer to her. After that, everything just went blank.

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Jennie quickly strode out of the car and walked towards her house without looking back. Lisa was left dumfounded inside her car, petrified.

What the hell happened?

It took her few more seconds before she decided to move --- or to even blink. Lisa touched her cheek with a hand. She felt her heart still pounding fiercely in her chest.

Did she just kiss me?

It all happened in just a blink of an eye. The last thing she remembered is the feeling of Jennie's soft lips on her cheek. It was just for a few seconds, but the sensation remained there. As far as she concerned, this is the best thing that has happened that night. She tapped the steering wheel with both her hands and made a fast drum beat.

Yes! Yes! YES!!!

Jisoo's bar

"I'm glad your girlfriend approved you being here," said Irene. She was already waiting in the lobby area when Lisa arrived.

"Yeah, she knows Jisoo so it's fine."

On the other hand, Lisa can't get the smile off her face. She doesn't care if Irene and Kyungsoo will be sweeter this time around. She's on cloud nine and nothing or no one can erase the glee she's feeling.

"Well, you got one clingy girlfriend here, Lali."

Remembering what Jennie asked her to do, Lisa rode along and said, "Yeah, that's what I love about her. She's really sweet."

Irene doesn't seem to know what to say anymore. She tucked her arm in Lisa's. "Come on, Jisoo and Kyungsoo are waiting for us inside."

"Okay, let's go."

"Wait a sec, is that dirt on your face?"

Lisa didn't move as Irene held her face. "A dirt?"

Irene chuckled. "What a sly girlfriend you have there, Lali."

"Why?"

"Nothing." said Irene, pulling out a handkerchief to wipe the kiss mark on Lisa's cheeks.

Quiz

Wednesday -- Office

"Lisa."

Lisa noticed a chat from Jennie. *"Yeah?"*

"I realized this just now, have you booked our room yet?"

Lisa giggled. The term 'our room' is too much for her to take. She doesn't want to think about it that much yet. Just imagining that she'll be alone with Jennie in a room sends shivers all over her body.

"Irene took care of it for us, Jennie."

"Wow, your ex is very generous. I told you, she really wants you to come."

"She said it's her late graduation gift for me. And she's not my ex."

"Oh, really 🤔."

Lisa chuckled. "By the way, our check in date is on Friday night. We'll check out Sunday noon."

"So, we'll drive straight there after office on Friday?"

"Something like that."

"How long is the travel time?"

"2 to 3 hours. I'll drive us there."

"Okay. That means you are obliged to pick me up on Friday before going here to the office. I don't want to carry my things up here."

"Yeah, sure. Planning on bringing the whole house with ya?"

"Crazy!"

Lisa can't believe that this is really happening: a trip with Jennie alone. This is way better than a date. Plus, the fact that they need to pretend as a couple really makes it the best trip she'd sign up so far.

"Hey, Lisa. Could you come with me later?"

"Where to?"

"Shopping. I still have to buy some things for the trip. Rosé would be a great company however I'm sure she'll just annoy me with too much questions. I'm not in the mood right now to explain things to her, you know."

"I understand. I think it's a perfect idea. We still need to talk about some details concerning the questions that Irene might throw at us. A little practice or rehearsal would help."

"Oh, yeah. I'm glad you remember that. Let's talk about that over dinner?"

"Are you asking me for a date?"

"Excuse me!"

"Hahaha! I'm sorry, boss. And is it okay if we'll drop by a flower shop in Hongdae before we go to dinner?"

"Not a problem for me. Buying flowers?"

"I'm making a reservation. I'll give it to Irene on Friday for her birthday."

"Okay then. I'll see you later at the parking area after five o'clock."

"Got it."

Mall

Judging from Jennie's actions, Lisa is starting to think that Jennie is equally excited as her about this coming trip. Lisa's not sure if it's because they are traveling alone, which is her personal reason for being excited about it, or if it's because it will be Jennie's first time to go there. Jennie's basket is currently full of girly stuff that puzzle Lisa with the purpose of each.

Moisturizing lotion, baby powder, facial cream, sunscreen lotion, tissue, shampoo, conditioner, eyelash curler, foundation, toner; is she really bringing all of those there?

"Hey, Lisa, look at this!"

Lisa was kind of lost in thoughts when she felt Jennie tugged her. She turned around and saw a stand featuring the cherry-flavored edible lipstick they worked on before.

"This was our first project together, right?" said Jennie, picking an item from the stand and raising the lipstick between their faces.

"Y-yeah..."

Lisa was unsure how to respond. Seeing that lipstick made her remember the 'car scene' last Friday. Her eyes automatically landed on Jennie's lips. She felt the burning sensation in her cheek again like it has been imprinted there, like it just happened yesterday.

Jennie also felt awkward when she saw Lisa's reaction. She remembered the kiss too. She's not sure if Lisa is even aware of what she did, or why she even did that. She knows the possibility that Irene might have removed the kiss mark without telling Lisa. They never talked about it when they met in the office after weekend.

Unknown to Lisa, Jennie's face was burning red that night when she went out of the car. There's no better way she could think of to get back at Irene who had surely pushed Jennie almost on the edge.

That night, after getting inside her house and finally closing the door, Jennie slowly slid down the wall into a sitting position. She was glad that her mom

was upstairs because she doesn't know how to handle her heart beating wildly against her chest.

"Look, that's the tagline you've thought of, right?" said Lisa this time, wanting to change the topic.

Jennie looked at where Lisa was pointing and whispered the lines as she reads it, "Make men crave for more."

"Cool, huh?" Lisa nudged her. "I told you, you've done a great job on that."

Jennie raised again the lipstick on her hand to observe it.

"I wonder," said Lisa, looking at the lipstick, "does it really taste like cherry?"

Jennie answered Lisa with a suspicious eyes and a devious smile. She and gently slapped Lisa and said, "Perv."

"Perv? Hey, I I didn't mean it that way."

Jennie turned around with a taunting face. "Yeah, I didn't say you mean it that way, I'm just teasing you."

"Where are you going?" asked Lisa.

Jennie raised the lipstick again before moving forward. "I'm buying this."

Lisa just smiled. *Oh, Jennie.*

Hongdae

Judging from Lisa's gestures, how she keeps on scratching her head and how she observes every establishment in the area, Jennie knew that Lisa hasn't been to that flower shop before."

"Are you sure you got the correct address?" asked Jennie. She's starting to wonder why Lisa is bothering to go to this one even though there are lots of flowers shops near her apartment.

"Yeah, it should be just around here," said Lisa, tilting her head left and right. "There!"

Lisa parked in front of the shop and started unbuckling her seatbelt. "Come on, Jennie, let's go."

"Should I still come with you? You're just making a reservation, right?" asked Jennie, still wondering why Lisa looks excited to go in the shop.

"Well, the owner is a friend of mine. This is the first time I'm visiting her shop and I might buy some time inside."

"Oh, okay."

Cling! Cling! Cling!

Lisa was surprised by the sound of the chime bells hanging on the door when she opened it. She met eyes with the woman at the counter who's already looking at her.

"Lisa!" Krystal exclaimed. She strode towards the new customer and gave a powerful hug. "You're here!" Her hands shifted to Lisa's face and wiggled the latter's head. "Look at you, you're so handsome!"

"Ehrm... Ehrm..." Jennie cleared her throat to remind the two that they are not alone.

Krystal removed her hands immediately and parted herself from Lisa. "Oh, I didn't know you have company. Sorry."

"It's okay." Lisa smiled. She turned to her colleague and said, "By the way, Krys, this is Jennie, my friend. Jennie, this is Krystal, she's a good friend of mine too."

"Hi, Krystal." Jennie changed expression from sulky to cheerful. They exchanged wai's.

"Wow..." Krystal's tone cannot hide her thrill of finally meeting with the woman behind the long calls she had with Lisa almost every night. "Lisa was right, you're beautiful."

Oh, Krystal, don't say that! Lisa placed her fingers on her temples.

Jennie got confused. "What.. do you.. mean?"

Krystal realized her mistake. "Well, Lisa has been telling me about some of her officemates that she's really fond of. She always talks about you a lot and uh..." Krystal was trying to remember other names that Lisa has mentioned her, "...and Tzuyu. Yeah, Tzuyu!"

Lisa tried to hide her laughter.

I remember I told her once about Tzuyu. But all of the people in the office, she remembered Tzuyu?

"Tzuyu?" Jennie chuckled. "I didn't know you and Tzuyu were close, Lisa."

"Yeah, we're close, hehe." Lisa scratched her neck. "It's just that I'm the one who does the talking most of the time."

Jennie laughed. "Yeah, she doesn't even talk to anybody."

Krystal was relieved to get away from that. "So, what's with the surprise visit, Lisa?"

"I'd like to reserve for a bouquet of white and purple Tulips. I'll be picking it up Friday afternoon."

"Tulips? A good choice. May I know what the occasion is?" asked Krystal.

"It's for a birthday of an old friend. I believe I already mentioned Irene to you, right? Tulips are her favorite."

Krystal nodded. "Oh, for Irene? Yeah. I remember."

Jennie was silently observing the two. She noticed that Krystal seems to know a lot of things about Lisa. She even knows Irene.

"Are you going out this weekend?" asked Krystal, walking towards the counter. "You told me that the other day when I called you."

"Yeah, vacation is good once in a while," said Lisa, looking around the area. "You have a nice place here, Krys."

Krystal was writing something down. She paused a moment and said, "Thanks, I'm glad you liked it."

"But I think you should improve your signage outside. It's kinda hard to notice."

"I'm planning to, but I don't know what design to do yet."

"I can create designs for you if you want."

Krystal smiled right away. "Are you sure?"

Lisa nodded. "Yeah, that's what I do."

Krystal showed her grin, flashing out her pearl white teeth.

Cling! Cling! Cling!

The sound of the chime bells echoed in the room again when Lisa opened the door. "I guess I'll see you around, Krys."

"We'll keep in touch." Krystal winked. "Take care, guys. It's nice meeting you, Jennie."

"Nice meeting you too, Krystal. Bye now." Jennie smiled as she stepped out of the door.

Lisa signaled her hand "I'll call you" before she exits the door.

"I'm hungry now, Lisa."

Lisa unlocked the car and checked her wristwatch. She realized that it's almost seven in the evening. "Where do you want to eat?"

"I don't know."

"You don't know? I guess that restaurant is hard to find," said Lisa, opening the car door.

Jennie stomped a foot in annoyance. "Tsk. Lisa!"

Lisa raised both her hands in surrender. "Haha! Sorry, sorry. What are you craving for, your highness?"

Jennie placed a finger on her chin and frowned. "I don't know."

"Hmm, pasta?" Lisa made a wild guess to help. Jennie shook her head.

"Hmm. Chicken? What, you still don't know? How about Chinese food?"

Jennie shook her head again.

Lisa got even more confused. "You don't like it or you don't know if you like it?"

"I don't know." Jennie jutted her lower lip out in a pout.

Lisa scratched her head, trying to figure out what Jennie wants. "Uh, you're gonna be one difficult girlfriend, Jen."

"Then don't pretend to be with me," said Jennie, rolling her eyes.

Lisa smiled to herself. She raised her right hand showing three fingers.

"Let's put it this way. I have three things in mind right now. Choose whichever you like: option one, two, three?"

"What are those?"

"I have assigned specific restaurant for each option. You decide which option you like and I'll tell you where it'll be."

"What if I don't like the option I chose?"

"It's either you decide now where you want to go or choose from these three." Lisa pointed at the three fingers again.

"Okay." Jennie looks up while carefully thinking. "I think I like the option three."

"Are you sure?"

"Yeah, what is one and two first?"

"Option one is grabbing sea foods," said Lisa, raising her index finger while counting. "Option two is the Oishi Buffet for some Japanese foods."

"Wow, you really know where the nearest restaurants are, huh," said Jennie, amazed. "And where is option three?"

"Option three is Burger King Drive-thru."

Jennie bent her head to show her disapproval. "Burger again?"

Lisa laughed. "Hey, you're the one who picked it. Besides, I haven't eaten a burger in a week now, Jennie."

Jennie knitted her brows while thinking if she'll agree with Lisa's idea. On the other hand, she admired Lisa's wit in making her choose a place to eat.

"Fine, but where should we eat that? You said Drive-thru right?"

Lisa winked. "I know the exact perfect place."

Lisa's Apartment.

After buying the foods, Lisa brought Jennie to the rooftop of her apartment building. She was glad that no one is there to disturb their little date. The rooftop gives them a panoramic view of Seoul at night: city lights, vehicles, and tiny people walking.

She was glad that Jennie seemed to like the idea of being there. They spent the first ten minutes staring down and talking about random stuffs before they've decided to finally eat.

"Do you often eat here alone?" asked Jennie before scooping the last pieces of fries left in the box. Lisa was sitting on her left.

"Mmm-mmm." Lisa hummed while sipping her juice.

"Have you brought Irene her before?"

Lisa shook her head as she puts down the box of juice on the bench they are sitting on. "I just recently discovered this place after Irene left for Singapore."

"Oh." Jennie took a sip on her juice too. She felt glad about it.

"You're the first person I brought her," said Lisa, rubbing her palms together between her legs.

Sometimes Jennie doesn't know if Lisa is just a heart-teaser who is an expert in doing these kind of things to everybody. Whatever she does, even in the simplest form or gestures, she never fails to make Jennie feel that she's important, that she's special, and that's one of the reasons she's so fond of Lisa now.

"This is a nice place, Lisa. Thank you."

"You're welcome." Lisa set her eyes on the view in front of them. "About Irene's questions, I think we have to discuss that now."

"Ah, yeah. The last time Irene talked to me I felt like I was in the session court, or I was being interviewed for a job position." Jennie chuckled at the memory.

"I told you, she's a nosy person. What are the things she asked you?"

"The usual things that are being asked to couples: how long have we been together, where we met, things like that."

"How are we supposed to know what are the other possible things she would ask us? Should we create a fake love story?"

Jennie stretched her arms behind her back. "Why don't we search the internet for couple quizzes? Let's just come up with answers for each. I believe that might be easier than coming up with a story. All we need to do is just relate things as much as possible to what really has happened, and let's just add spices to make it romantic."

"Hmm. That's a good idea. Let's see.." Lisa grabbed her iPad inside the bag and opened the browser immediately.

Jennie scooted closer to Lisa to get a better view of the screen. She didn't mind that their arms are touching side by side. "There, I think that's a good one."

Lisa taps a finger on the screen and the first question flashed right away.

Where did you first meet?

"That's an easy question, in the office, right?" Said Jennie, hooking her chin on Lisa's shoulder.

Lisa loved that feeling. "Yeah, piece of cake." The second question came out after she taps the screen again.

Who made the first move?

Jennie raised her head and said, "This is obvious, Lisa. It has to be you."

"What, why me?"

"It would be weird if I made the first move."

Lisa saw Jennie raised an eyebrow at her. "Huh? Is it not possible that you made the first move?"

"You want to tell Irene that I seduced you? No way, Lisa!" Jennie recoiled, slapping Lisa's arm. "Give me some pride. I am still the woman in this relationship so you should be the one who made the first move."

"That's unfair, Jennie. You're the one who came into my department first, do you remember that?"

"Excuse me. It was Rosé who wanted to meet you, not me," said Jennie, realizing that Lisa has a point. "She dragged me there because she knows I can make Kai introduce you to her."

Lisa felt there's no way she'd win this argument. "Ugh. Fine! If I made the first move, then what move did I make?"

The ladies' room scene, their first actual encounter after bumping into each other, flashed in Jennie's mind. That was the day she understood why girls are crazy over Lisa.

"You smiled at me."

Lisa got confused. "Huh? I made a move just by smiling at you?"

"I mean, you smiled first then you befriended me," said Jennie, remembering how she felt when Lisa smiled at her before.

Lisa didn't speak another word but she stared Jennie directly, one eyebrow raised.

"W-what?" Jennie felt conscious.

"You mean... I got you with just one smile?" asked Lisa, nudging Jennie.

Jennie looked away immediately and grunted, "Say whatever you like."

Feeling victorious of being able to tame Jennie, Lisa tapped the screen again. "Okay, next question."

Who said I love you first?

"Answer is obvious, Lisa, still it should be you."

Lisa scratched her head. "This is unfair, Jennie. You're making it look like I courted you."

"What's wrong with you courting me?" Jennie retort. Even though they are only pretending to be a real couple, she still wants to feel that they went through a process where Lisa tried to win her heart.

"It's because Irene knows I don't believe in the essence of courtship."

"You don't? Why?"

"Because lying is the biggest issue in courting," said Lisa, placing the tablet on her side. "A guy will always display the best colors he has when he's hitting on a girl. The same things happen when a girl likes a guy. For me, it's just not really a good way to start a romantic relationship."

Jennie was amazed on Lisa's reasoning. She realized that she had the same reason why most of her suitors end up being friend zoned by her.

"I still believe that the foundation of the best relationship is a great friendship," said Lisa, her hand gesturing in the air. "You have to start as friends first, without wanting to date each other right away, and just let fate decided for the both of you."

Jennie realized that it's the same thing that happened between Irene and Lisa. Somehow, she felt envious. Now she knows why Irene asked her if Lisa courted her or not.

"Then let's just say we've been friends for a couple of months and we grew closer after our first project together, the lipstick ad," said Jennie.

"That's good. What happened next after our first project?" Lisa doesn't want to mess up the story with her ideas because Jennie is more used in doing this.

"Hmm." Jennie looked up the sky with a finger on her chin. "After our first project we started going out alone, things like that. Although we're going out as friends we weren't aware that we're feeling for each other was more than what we thought it was."

Lisa's eyes were on the floor while thinking that the same exact thing happened to her.

Jennie saw it as an opportunity to stare at Lisa's beautiful face. "And for some twists and turns of fate," she paused, leaning closer to Lisa's ear to whisper in her sweetest tone, "in the end we realized that we fell in love with each other."

Lisa felt the hot breath in her ear, causing her to whip her head to her side. It was a bad move however because Jennie's face was too close to her, literally like an inch away.

Feeling a big gush of awkwardness coming between them, Lisa and Jennie turned away immediately from each other.

"I'm sorry," both said at the same time.

"No worries, it was my fault." said Lisa, embarrassed. However, she can't erase the thought that she almost kissed Jennie. In fact, she was close to doing that.

Lisa raised the tablet on her hand and continued looking at the questions to distract herself from doing something inappropriate to the lady beside her.

On the other hand, Jennie's hand was on her lips. She's partly blaming herself for what happened. It was too close that she even felt Lisa's breath on her face. But the funny thing about it is she knows she was already possessed the moment she looked at Lisa's eyes, but she doesn't have the strength to fight it.

If one of her suitors has done that thing to her before, intentionally or not, she knows she'll get turned off and will be disgusted. But it's different with

Lisa, and Jennie doesn't know why. She's not mad at all. In fact, she felt strangely nervous instead.

"Black and Pink, right?" asked Lisa, raising the tablet for Jennie to see the screen.

What's your lover's favorite color?

Jennie glanced at Lisa for a second and went back to the tablet. "How did you know?"

"How would I not know?" Lisa made it obvious that she's looking at Jennie's blouse.

Jennie smiled when she realized that she's currently wearing a pink and black blouse. Her bag is also pink and black. "How about you?"

"That's the problem. I don't know what my favorite color is."

"How come you don't know?"

"Hmm.. I'm not sure. I picked the clothes based on their styles not because of their color."

"Does Irene know your favorite color?"

"Nope. You'll have to help me figure that out, Jennie."

"If Irene doesn't know it then I don't have to worry about it. Let's move to the next question." Jennie tapped the screen this time.

When is your anniversary?

"I told Irene that we became an official couple when you called me on New Year's Eve, is that okay?" asked Jennie.

"That was January 1st, right?"

"Yeah, you don't want that date?"

"It's fine. Besides, Irene already knows about it," said Lisa. "Does that mean it'll be our second week together this Saturday?"

Jennie nodded in response.

Lisa had to look away because she felt a rush of emotion filling her chest. She can't control her smile. She tapped the screen again.

What is your lover's nickname for you?

Lisa lowered the tablet on her legs. "Why did you come up with honey by the way?"

"It was the spur of the moment, Lisa," said Jennie, eyes on the tablet. "I had to think of something to make it obvious that we're together. The first thing that came into my mind is that."

Lisa bit her lower lip, remembering that Jennie called her the same when she was drunk before.

"You don't like honey?" asked Jennie, feeling shy because Lisa might have thought of it as an ugly endearment.

"No, no. It's fine. It's sweet. I like it. I like the sound of it."

That made Jennie smile. "Honestly that's what I've always imagine myself calling my future lover. Maybe that's the reason that it was the first endearment that came into my mind."

"I'm sorry. I guess you've associated that to a wrong person instead of reserving it for the future."

"It's okay. I can still use it anyway."

"But you might remember me each time you call your boyfriend honey, hahaha!"

Jennie hits Lisa's arm gently. "Crazy!"

"Okay, let's move forward." Lisa swiped the screen. Her eyes widened when she saw the next question.

Where was your first kiss?

Jennie noticed Lisa's hand froze after seeing that question. She felt shy herself, remembering what she did the last time in the car.

Lisa swiped the screen right away. "Okay, let's just skip that question."

"Mmm-mmm." Jennie burried her face on Lisa's shoulder. She noticed Lisa's face reddened from her view.

Where is the wildest place you have made woo-hoo?

"Wohohoho! Lisa flipped the cover of her tablet, hoping that Jennie didn't read the entire question. "Let's just stop this, Jen. I think the questions are for married couples. Besides, we've only been together for weeks, right? Let's just say that we're still in the stage of getting to know each other."

"Agree. Let's just save us from the stress of thinking all the details."

Lisa felt relieved with what Jennie said.

"But isn't it a bit too early for a woo-hoo?"

"W-what do you mean?"

"Well, for a fresh couple who'd been together for only two weeks, don't you think that it's a bit early to do something like that right away?" asked Jennie innocently.

"Uh... I'm feeling awkward now with what you're saying, Jen."

"Why do you feel awkward with woo-hoo? What if Irene asked about it?" Jennie didn't mind pointing that out because she's not really thinking about it. She's more embarrassed to talk about kissing because of what she did last time.

"Let's just say we haven't crossed that line yet," said Lisa, her eyes looking far away. Jennie was studying Lisa's reaction, wondering why the latter is feeling awkward. Then her expression changed from calm to shock. She slapped Lisa's arm. "Wait, are you imagining it?"

"Uh... no.. no! Of course not!"

"Then why are you blushing? You perv!" Jennie accused, giving Lisa another playful slap on the shoulder.

"It's just too awkward to talk about it! I bet Irene won't even ask that!"

"Yeah, she won't ask that because she knows you're slow."

Lisa scratched her head again while glaring at Jennie.

Call me slow one more time and I'll kiss you right here, right now.

"What?" asked Jennie.

"Nothing."

The old wind blew then, making the two turn their gaze to the view in front of them. They stayed silent for a while, savoring the peaceful moment they are experiencing.

"Don't forget to pick me up on Friday, okay?" Said Jennie.

Lisa nodded. "You ready for our weekend getaway?"

"I'm excited, Lisa, very much excited."

"Me too." Lisa smiled back. Come on, it's getting late, I'll drive you home."

Honey

Ugh! What now!

It's already 1:57 am and Lisa is still wide awake. She's supposed to be asleep by now because of her early schedule but the idea of picking up Jennie in the morning, like a real girlfriend, is keeping her excitement up to the highest level. Endorphins flooded her brain and it's just won't allow her to sleep.

She tried everything she can to doze off to dreamland. She's not sure how many times she's been rolling on her bed just to find the most comfortable position that could put her to slumber. She fell asleep past three in the morning.

Groggy Lisa woke up at six o'clock and felt like she'd slept for fifteen minutes only. It doesn't matter though because she doesn't want to be late. After she bathed herself she saw a text message from Jennie.

"Good morning! Let me know when you're on your way. I'll be waiting for you outside my gate. "

Lisa grinned in excitement. This is one of those moments she appreciates living alone because she doesn't need to worry about someone seeing her in that state: giggling in delight like a crazy person.

Jennie was already waiting outside her house when Lisa arrived. Jennie purposely set it that way because she wanted to avoid the possibility of Lisa getting out of the car and be seen by her mom. Jennie had set her mind to enjoy this trip over the weekend and she doesn't want her homophobic mom to ruin it.

When she entered the car Jennie was taken aback by Lisa's charm. This is not the first time this has happened. In fact, this keeps on happening during each first sight. Lisa is wearing a simple printed black shirt and sunglasses.

Jennie is still wondering to herself how this person could look so appealing in whatever she wears.

Lisa on the other hand, as usual, always mesmerized by Jennie. She never imagined in her life that a girl could be so girly in that way. Whatever Jennie is doing: sitting, walking, thinking, frowning, everything is just making her heart melts. She's still wondering how things ended up that way. It's like a dream come true for her: spending the weekend alone with Jennie plus she gets to pretend that they are together. What could be better, right?"

After their work, the pair quickly stopped by at Krystal's place to get the flowers they'd reserved the other day. They drove straight to their destination, enjoying the view on the way, talking about random stuffs, and occasionally teasing each other.

They finally arrived at the resort. Lisa saw Kyungsoo and Irene right away when they entered the parking lot. The two were waiting for them just outside their car. Kyungsoo signaled Lisa to park beside them.

After parking the car in place, Lisa didn't realize that she was staring at Irene. She can't deny that Irene's presence still gives her uneasy feelings.

"Hey," Jennie called, squeezing Lisa's hand on the gearshift. "We're going to enjoy this trip together, okay?"

Lisa's heart melted at that. "Of course, of course, we surely will. Come on."

Jennie stepped out of the car first. "Hey, guys!"

Kyungsoo welcomed her with a quick hug. "Hello, Jennie, mmmm! I'm glad you two got here safe."

Irene came close for a cheek kiss. "I'm so happy you both really came here!"

Jennie faked a smile, unsure if Irene was sincere about what she said.

"Hey there." Lisa closed the door on her side. She walked towards Irene with the bouquet of flowers in her hands. "This is for the celebrant. Happy

birthday, Hyun."

Irene smiled. "This are beautiful! You shouldn't have bother yourselves. But then, thank you."

Lisa stood beside Jennie after handling the bouquet. "That's from us."

"Happy birthday, Irene," said Jennie, linking arms with Lisa.

"That's so sweet of you guys, thank you."

"You're welcome," Jennie and Lisa said in unison.

"By the way, Lisa, is it just me or you looked kind of tired?" asked Kyungsoo, concerned.

"Honestly, I'm a bit tired. Traffic was terrible," said Lisa, massaging her temples.

"But did you get some sleep last night? Your eyes are dark," Irene followed up.

"I slept early but I woke up early too. I had to pick up this baby from her house this morning." Lisa patted Jennie on the head.

Feeling guilty, Jennie wrapped her arms around Lisa's waist. "Aww. My honey is tired because of me."

Lisa didn't expect that move from Jennie but then she recovered immediately. "It's okay. It's as if I have a choice. You'd be mad anyway if I didn't pick you up, right?"

"Of course! That's your responsibility to me."

Lisa laughed, amazed at Jennie's acting. "I know, I know. I'm not complaining, okay?"

Jennie hooked her chin on Lisa's shoulder, tightening her hug. "I'll give you a massage later, what do you say?"

"Okay, okay, you better get a room now, you two cupcakes," said Kyungsoo, handing them the keycards of their room. "We hope you'll like the rooms here."

"Thanks, Kyungsoo, and I think we will," said Lisa.

"Our room is just across yours," said Irene.

Jennie secretly smiled to herself.

You wouldn't really let Lisa get out of your sight, would you?

"Irene's birthday celebration is tomorrow night," said Kyungsoo. "Let's just meet later, maybe after an hour, for dinner. Just drop your things first and you take a short break, Lisa."

"Okay, see you after an hour then."

"Enjoy your room guys." Kyungsoo patted Lisa on the shoulder as they walk passed them, giving her a weird grin.

Lisa swallowed a lump in her throat. She knew Kyungsoo meant something with that.

"Woowooow! This is awesome!" There was an extreme excitement in Jennie's voice when they opened their room's door.

Irene had reserved them a deluxe ocean-facing-room which is defined by a wooden accent theme --- green and brown. The interior is elegant and comfortable in the eyes. There is a king sized bed that opens to a furnished balcony overlooking the landscaped water park and the beach.

Jennie went to open the balcony door and stepped outside to check the view. "I can't believe it! Irene has surely a good taste, huh?"

Lisa was amazed too with the interior of the room. It's cozy and the view outside is nice. But what's gotten her attention at the moment is not the

view, but the bed.

Do I really have to sleep beside her later?

Her eyes wandered from the bed to the balcony where Jennie is currently standing and staring outside. She traced Jennie's image from her head, down to her back, down to...

Oh, my gaaaaaaad! Please don't let sanity snap out of me even for a second!

When she noticed the silence, Jennie looked back to check on Lisa. "Hey, are you okay? Could you close the door please?"

"Ah, yes."

Lisa turned to shut the door behind her. She had forgotten everything she needs to do when she saw the bed. She put her mobile phone on the bedside table to pretend she's doing something.

Jennie isn't dumb not to sense that something is still bothering Lisa. She went back in and dropped her sling bag on the couch. "Are you sure you're okay?"

"Yeah." Lisa lied.

"Is Irene bothering you still?"

"No. Headache is just attacking. By the way, are you okay with.. with this?"

Jennie looked at where Lisa is pointing and saw the king sized bed. "Okay with what?"

"The.. the bed..."

Jennie placed her hands on her waist. "Honestly, I think it's too big for us."

"Yeah, but are you comfortable sleeping beside me?"

Jennie raised an eyebrow. "Ahh, so you we're thinking of thaaaaaat...."

Lisa avoided Jennie's eyes right away. "I'm just worried that you're not comfortable ----"

"Pssh. Oh come on, Lisa, don't worry about it. I was expecting this would happen."

Lisa felt at ease with what she heard. "Oh, you did?"

"Yeah, and I don't have problems with that. It's not like you're gonna force me into it," Jennie snickered, waling around to observe the entire bed. She turned to Lisa again when the latter was still silent. "You won't do that, right?"

Lisa chuckled. "Of course, I wont. Truth is I am more worried that you might do it to me."

"Excuse me!" Jennie scowled, giving Lisa a who-do-you-think-you-are look.

"I'm not sure of your intentions yet, honey. You're the one who insisted on going on this trip, right?"

"Ah, so you think you're a catch, eh?" Jennie glared to scrutinize Lisa from head to foot.

"I never said that."

Jennie went to the bed and arranged the pillows, putting some of them in the middle. She went back standing, folding her arms on her chest.

"You sleep on the right side, I sleep on the left side, you okay with that?"

"Do we really need to put pillows in the middle?" asked Lisa.

"Yes, we do, because I'm afraid that I might assault you, *honey*," Jennie sarcastically said, putting emphasis on the last word.

Lisa laughed. She was glad that the tension she's feeling earlier had already vanished.

Jennie walked towards the bed and sat on it. She looked up and observe the ceilings design. "Since we're talking about that, I wonder, is Irene gonna think that we're doing woo-hoo here?"

Lisa waved her hands in front of her as shyness caught her right away.

"Oh, come on, Jen, not that again!"

It's easier for Lisa to joke about raping each other but every time the term woo-hoo comes out from Jennie, she can't help but feel awkward. Sometimes she wonders how Jennie can ask about that thing so innocently.

Jennie laughed. "Why are you so shy about woo-hoo? It's not like we're gonna do it, right?"

"It's just too awkward to talk about it."

Jennie stretched out her hand to Lisa. "Come here."

Lisa didn't react.

"Sit beside me, honey," Jennie used the sweetest tone while tapping her left hand on the space beside her.

"W-why?"

"Let's do it."

"Do.. what?.."

"You know.." said Jennie, having a sexy grin playing on her lips.

Lisa's jaw dropped. "Uh, stop kidding me..."

Jennie laughed again. "You pervert! You're thinking of something else, weren't you?" She patted her hand again on the bed. "Come here, sit beside

me, I'll give you a massage, remember?"

"It's okay, you don't have to do that."

"Tsk. Lisa!"

"Uh, yes, yes." Lisa followed immediately. She climbed on the bed and sat beside the boss.

"You said your head is aching, right?" Jennie positioned herself to face Lisa, put her hands in Lisa's hair and began massaging the latter's scalp. "I'll be a bad girlfriend if I won't take care of you."

"Aww, that's so sweet of you, honey."

"Does it help?"

"Yeah."

The feeling of Jennie's caress on her scalp is just so soothing that it is actually relaxing her. Unconsciously, she was already staring at Jennie.

Sigh. You're so beautiful.

Jennie felt awkward when she sensed Lisa's eyes were fixed on her. Her hand stopped. She docked her head down, avoiding those eyes, afraid that she might lose her senses if she'd looked at those again.

"Uhm, Lisa?"

"Y-yeah?"

"Can I give you back massage instead?"

"Mmm, if it isn't too much trouble for you, I think that's better."

"Yeah, just..." Jennie signaled her hand for Lisa to turn around.

Lisa turned around right away and Jennie's palms landed on her shoulders.

Instead of making her feel better, Jennie felt worse. Seeing Lisa's back had some sort of hypnotizing effect on her. Lisa's back is inviting her to wrap her arms around and execute a back hug.

Oh my gosh, what's happening to me?

"Are you okay, Jennie?"

"I uh... I think it's better if you lie on the bed instead."

"Oh, okay." Lisa was about to move when she realized something. "You wouldn't want me to take off my shirt, right?"

"Of course not!" Jennie sneered.

"Haha! Don't be mad there, honey." Lisa rolled herself on the bed. "How should we do this?"

Jennie pointed a finger at her side. "Just lay prone here and I'll massage you."

Lisa positioned herself comfortably on the bed, lying prone with her arms stretched up. "Aaaah! This bed is so soft..." She groped a pillow to snuggle her face into it. "Honey, are you sure that you won't break any of my bones?"

"Crazy. You'll enjoy this, honey."

As Jennie put pressure on the back of Lisa's neck with her thumbs, gently moving them in tiny circles, Lisa felt pleasure and relief right away.

"Oooh.. that's good..." Lisa mumbled into the pillow. "Where did you learn to do that?"

"I don't have formal training for this. I'm just used to massaged my dad before and he loved it too." Jennie's hand worked slowly down Lisa's back.

"There... You're getting the right spot.. there.. oh my, you're really good at this."

Jennie was happy to see Lisa enjoy her massage. "You got a lot of stress here, honey."

"Yeah... I know... You know what, honey..."

"What?"

"Your... your future boyfriend... I think.. is going to be.. a one.. lucky.. guy..."

Jennie smiled as she continuously strokes Lisa's back. "You think so?"

"Mmm-mmm."

"Why?"

"Well.. there are many reasons.. but I.. can't tell them.. to.. you..."

"Why not?"

"I'd love to tell you.. but.. I can't remember.. a thing now. Your hands.. they are.. distracting my thoughts..."

A few more minutes, Jennie noticed that Lisa isn't moving anymore. She tucked her hair behind her ear to listen closely. She smiled when she heard little snores.

Poor Lisa, guess she's really tired.

She let Lisa take a short nap while she arranged her things. She went to the bathroom to take a quick shower and found Lisa in the exact same position when she got out. She walked towards the bed, bent down and leaned her body on the edge to stare at Lisa closely.

Look who's sleeping like a little kid.

This is one of those rare cases when she has the courage to look at Lisa's face directly without worrying that those piercing eyes will stare back at her. Jennie moved her hand to brush Lisa's silky bangs from her face. Then

like a spell that always affects her, she cannot control her hand anymore. Her fingers wandered on Lisa's thick eyebrows, down to her eyes, her nose, and her...

Wait, what am I thinking?

Jennie pulled her hand slowly. She turned around and sat on the floor, resting her back on the bed frame.

Sigh. I'm getting crazy.

Mmmm-mmmm.. mmmm-mmmm.. mmmm-mmmm..

She was startled when she felt Lisa's phone vibrate on the bedside table. She grabbed it to check the caller. Lisa allowed her to answer the phone when it's Irene.

Hmm?

Her expectation was wrong. It wasn't Irene. The phone was flashing a picture of Lisa and a woman standing closely, smiling, with Taipei 101 in their background. The contact name is K-R-Y-S-T-A-L.

Oh, it's Krystal. I didn't know that they were together in Taiwan.

She waited the call to end before she placed it back on the table. There's no way she's going to disturb Lisa's sleep just to answer an *unimportant* call.

Bzzz..

Jennie raised her head when she heard the door buzzer. She stood up to open the door.

This time I'm sure it's her.

"Hi." Irene smiled at her.

"Oh, hey."

"Just checking if you guys are okay with your room."

Or maybe you're only checking what we're doing?

"Uh, yeah. Well, it's really nice, Irene. We both love it. Thank you."

"That's good." Irene nodded. "So, are you guys ready for dinner?"

"Uhhmm..." Jennie turned to check on the person inside, giving Irene an ample space to get a glimpse of the sleepy head. Jennie turned back to Irene to confirm it. "Lisa passed out."

"Aww. She's really tired, isn't she?"

"Yeah. I just gave her a massage to relieve her stress."

"Oh." Irene bit her lower lip and nodded again. "Could you wake her up for me later? Just give her a few more minutes for a power nap? I wouldn't want to wake her up but she hasn't gotten her dinner yet."

"Yeah, sure. I wouldn't let her sleep without having dinner either," said Jennie.

Irene seems to have run out of things to say. "I guess we'll meet you in the lobby after thirty minutes?"

"Okay, thirty minutes then."

"I'll see you in a while." Irene walked back to her room.

Jennie gestured a nod and closed the door. She walked towards the bed and leaned over to stare at Lisa's face again.

I wonder what you would do if Irene tells you she still loves you?

How was the story guys? I really hope you like it. Please let me know if it's good or not so I will improve my writing. I will try my best to update every

night. Thank you so much. ♥♥

Moments

"Are you done yet?" asked Jennie. She's currently grooming her hair in front of the mirror.

"Two more minutes, okay?"

"Ugh! You're so slow, Lisa!"

The bathroom door creaked open, revealing Lisa from inside. "Slow? You're the one who woke me up late, like five minutes ago, asking me to get ready right away."

"Well, I never knew that it would take me a lot of effort to wake you up, *honey*," said Jennie, putting emphasis on the endearment.

Lisa walked towards her. "Are you done yourself?"

"Yes, I'm ready. Hey, what's that!" Jennie was surprised to see Lisa's face still drenched in water, having an I-jusy-woke-up hairdo.

"What? I washed my face," said Lisa innocently.

"And are you doing out like that?" Jennie grabbed a towel to dry Lisa's face.

"Tsk. You're such a kid, Lisa."

"Mmmm. I wasn't planning on going out like this, f-y-i," said Lisa, her voice muffled against the towel.

"Whatever." Jennie dropped the towel and stared at Lisa's hair. "What are you gonna do with that?"

"This?" Lisa brushed her fingers through her hair while peeking at the mirror. "Let's just leave it like this."

"Tsk. No!" Jennie cupped Lisa's shoulder and turned the latter to face her. "It's better this way." She fixed Lisa's hair with her hands. She knew that it didn't need much effort. Whether Lisa has messy or combed hair it'll surely look nice on her.

"Now how do I look, honey?" Lisa asked with her thumb and forefinger against her chin, flashing her signature smile that Jennie loved and hated at the same time.

Jennie couldn't help but admire her hair art. Lisa has changed into a new pair of polo shirt and shorts for dinner. The funny thing about it is the simpler she looked the more her charm shows up. "You're okay."

Lisa pursed her lips. "Just okay?"

"Yeah, what were you expecting me to say?"

"Anything but okay, you know."

"Ahm, okay. Then what adjective would you like me to use?"

"I don't know, maybe 'striking' would do," Lisa answered, beaming.

Jennie raised an eyebrow. "Oh, really?"

"Or maybe attractive, gorgeous, stylish, or dazzling..."

Jennie cocked her head to one side, expressing her disagreement. "I didn't know you were conceited, honey."

"Why thank you, honey."

Bzzz...

"I guess that's our call," said Lisa, walking over to open the door.

Jennie went to get her sling bag from the couch. "Just wait, I'm looking for my phone." She was still busy rummaging through the couch when she heard Irene's voice outside.

"Oh hi, Lali!"

"Hey, Hyun, looking pretty tonight, huh?" said Lisa, leaning against the door frame. "Where's Kyungsoo?"

"He's almost done retouching his makeup," said Irene, rolling her eyes. Lisa laughed at the joke. "Well, you look charming yourself. That shirt looks perfect on you."

"Charming your face," Jennie muttered when she finally found her cellphone.

"Ah, yeah? You're the one who gave this shirt, remember?" asked Lisa.

"I know, I know, see? I always choose what's best for you."

Jennie made a face while approaching the two people by the door. She looped her arm through Lisa and said, "Honey, I'm ready."

Lisa turned to her fake lover, touched the tip of Jennie's nose and smiled. "Hey there, beautiful." She went back to Irene and said, "Okay, shall we?"

"Wait, Lisa, let's fix this first." Irene stopped them to arranged Lisa's collar. Lisa wasn't expecting that but had to stay still.

Jennie rolled her eyes.

Just in time, Kyungsoo stepped out of their room and locked the door. "Where do you want to eat guys?"

Irene turned around after she's done with the collar. "Let's go to Flames. Barbeque is Lisa's favorite, right?"

"Yeah, I was already imagining and drooling over barbeque since last night," said Lisa.

"I knew it. Are you going to order the usual?" asked Irene, giving Jennie an idea that they've already gone there several times.

"Yeah!" Lisa grinned wildly, showing off her excitement. "I haven't eaten there since you left, Hyun. I'm going to order that same old meal. I miss that."

"Me too, Lali, I miss the same old meal. Let's go." Irene grabbed Kyungsoo's hand and started walking ahead of them.

Jennie flexed her jaw.

This girl is really bitching me.

Flames Restaurant

Kyungsoo had picked a private room for them. Like the last time they had dinner, the couple's were sitting in front of each other by pair. Irene and Lisa ordered the usual meal they used to get before. Kyungsoo ordered the house specialty. Jennie was having a hard time deciding on what to pick so Lisa ordered for her instead.

Their setup tonight was like a déjàvu of their last dinner together. Jennie noticed how Irene keeps on pointing out the things that she was doing with Lisa before. Jennie knew that the war isn't over yet.

Although it's not obvious to Kyungsoo and Lisa, Jennie feels that Irene is silently attacking her from time to time. If it wasn't for Lisa's unconscious support, she knows she'd been long defeated. She isn't doing anything to counter-attack but Lisa has been treating her like a princess the entire evening, making Jennie think that it's pissing Irene off.

Whatever sweetness Lisa is showing her, Jennie is completely aware that it's only a part of their acting. However, the more she's exposed to it the more she feels like she's getting used to it. Lisa has her own unique ways of showing her sweetness without making Jennie feel awkward about it. She just enjoys how Lisa pampers her.

"Baby, you should try this one..." Lisa was using the fork to hold the meat in place while slicing it with a knife. She planted the fork on it and turns to Jennie. "Aaahhhh!"

Jennie opened her mouth as Lisa held the fork to her. "Mmm." Lisa waited for her to response with a curious look on her face. "It's delicious," said Jennie, beaming.

"You like it?" Lisa looked happier with Jennie's reaction.

"Yeah, it's flavorful. I want more, honey."

Lisa turned to her plate, still smiling. "Sure, sure. I'll slice some more for you."

"I think I'm gonna have diabetes just by staring at you two," said Kyungsoo, pointing his fork at them. Jennie and Lisa laughed while Irene raised an eyebrow. "How long have you been together again?"

"They've only been together for two weeks, Soo. It's normal for new couples to be that sweet when the relationship is fresh and young," said Irene.

Lisa and Jennie looked at each other.

"Oh really? But you weren't that sweet to me darling when we started," said Kyungsoo, smiling at Irene.

A smile drew on Jennie's face. She tried not to make it obvious.

"Well, just your luck, Soo. I'm not that clingy type of girlfriend," Irene snorted.

Jennie didn't mind being attacked again. Instead, she grabbed her fork to get some food on her plate and give it to Lisa. "Mmm, try this one, honey."

Lisa opened her mouth to take in the food. "The barbeque here is one of the best," she said in between bites.

"But honestly, Lisa, your cooking is much better than this," Irene butted.

Jennie felt what Irene is trying to point out. She turned to Lisa and said, "Really? You can cook this?"

"Uh-huh." Lisa nods as she scoops another food into Jennie's mouth. "Want me to cook for you?"

That was the question Jennie has been waiting for. She agreed immediately. "I want to taste your cooking. Irene told me last time that you're really good at it."

"She did?" Lisa glanced at Irene who confirmed the statement by nodding. "Okay. Let's plan that for next week." Lisa went back to slicing the meat.

"Can I sleep over?" asked Jennie, tugging Lisa's sleeve.

Clank!

"Oops, sorry, slippery," said Lisa, grinning at Irene and Kyungsoo. She was too surprised with the question that she accidentally dropped the utensil on her plate. She's not sure if Jennie was serious about it or not. But since they were acting, she played along.

"Y-you want to?"

"Of course, I want to. I haven't slept in your apartment yet after we got official," said Jennie.

"Uh.. sure. Let's do that next Friday so we could stay up all night watching movies. Sounds good?"

"Sounds great!"

Their topic jumped into tomorrow's party all throughout their dinner. After finishing their food, Kyungsoo started telling stories about their Singapore experience. Lisa and Jennie were eagerly listening. Jennie was comfortable resting her head in Lisa's shoulder with their arms linked.

Lisa's mind wasn't focused on Kyungsoo anymore. She's more like savoring the moment while it lasts. She's not sure if it'll be the last time she can hold Jennie like that freely. Once they go back to their room everything will be normal again.

Lisa groped to reach for Jennie's hand under the table. Unexpectedly, Jennie opened her hand to let Lisa hold it. Lisa can't hold off her smile.

She partly turned her head aside to discreetly smell Jennie's hair. She wants to memorize the moment in her mind --- or freeze it if she can. Jennie's scent, weight, and warmth are giving her contentment. Lisa knows she can stay still for hours as long as Jennie is leaning on her that way.

Lisa lightly squeezed Jennie's hand. She knows that Jennie wouldn't mind it because the latter is seriously listening to Kyungsoo, even throwing in some questions from time to time. Lisa's heart skipped a bit when Jennie squeezed her hand back.

She trailed her fingers on Jennie's hand and massaged Jennie's thumb between her fingers. For the third time that night she was happy that Jennie returned the favor by squeezing her hand back. It was like two lovers playing each other's hand.

Lisa was on cloud nine at that moment. She can't explain it, but she has a feeling that Jennie enjoys whatever she's doing. She held Jennie's hand tight between her two hands and went back listening to Kyungsoo.

All of them were too tired for another adventure after dinner. They've all decided to call it a day. The couple's went back to their respective rooms after wishing each other good night.

After Jennie had brushed her teeth she noticed Lisa arranging the pillows on their bed. She shook her head after realizing what Lisa is doing.

"So, you're really putting pillows in between us?"

Lisa looked at Jennie, confused. "I thought you were serious about this?"

Jennie smiled. "Lisa, I'm not afraid of you, okay?"

"I know, but I am afraid of you."

Jennie grabbed the nearest pillow in her reach and threw it to Lisa. "Crazy!"

Lisa sat cross-legged on the bed after catching the pillow. "Haha! Let's sleep now, baby. I'm tired."

"Baby your face," Jennie snorted. She can't deny though that it sounded sweeter now that they are alone.

"You don't like it when I call you baby?"

"You can call me anything you like."

"Okay." Lisa smiled like an innocent child. She lay on the bed and readied herself to sleep. "Good night, baby."

Jennie folded her arms on her chest and chuckled.

I have to admit I like it more than honey.

Jennie climbed on the bed and lay on her side. After surrendering her weight on the bed, she sighed as a wave of tiredness hit her. It has been a long day. As the bed gives her the comfort she needs for a good night snooze, she knows it wouldn't take long before she falls asleep.

Jennie shifted her body to check if Lisa has already doze off to wonderland. Lisa's back is leaning against the middle pillow.

"Lisa?"

Lisa partly turned her head aside. "Yeah?"

"You tired?"

Lisa turned around slowly. "Yeah, you?"

"Same."

"Ain't sleepy yet?"

"Sleepy. I just want to say that I had a great day. Thanks."

Lisa managed to make a smile even though she's really sleepy. "I had a good day too, and thanks for the massage earlier."

"Nah, it's just a payback for picking me up this morning. Did that ease your stress somehow?"

"Yeah. You didn't end up killing me anyway."

Jennie punched her in the arm. "Yah!"

Lisa laughed, decreasing her sleepiness a bit. "Irene's party tomorrow starts in the evening. What do you want to do in the morning then?"

"Are they going with us tomorrow?"

"I don't think so. They could be busy preparing stuff, you know."

"So, we're on our own?"

"Yeah, I guess. Do you want them to come with us?"

"Honestly, I don't. It's kinda uncomfortable if your Joo-hyun is around. I have a feeling that she's checking everything I do."

"Oh, I'm sorry. I told you, Irene is a nosy person, Jen."

"Well she's not just nosy, she's jealous of me."

"It's because your acting is convincing, Ms. Actress."

"Well, you're good at it yourself, Lisa."

Lisa smiled. "You think so?"

"Yeah, you seem to be a natural actress yourself there," said Jennie. "Why are you laughing?"

"Nothing. I'm just thinking about this crazy stuff that's we're doing right now."

"You call this crazy?" asked Jennie, raising an eyebrow. "All of this because of your Irene."

"Nah, I told you, we're not going here for that, okay? Let's just enjoy tomorrow alone. I'm gonna show you around here."

"Really?" Jennie got excited.

"Yeah. Let's enjoy the day together, okay?"

"Yes!"

Lisa patted Jennie on her head. "So, we better sleep now. I'm dead tired."

"Okay." Jennie turned her body against the middle pillow. "Good night, honey."

Lisa smiled in response and said, "Good night, baby."

Stroll

Jennie slowly open her eyes and had a glimpse of the sun peeking through the window. She's not in the mood to get up yet because she's comfortably hugging the middle pillow and doesn't want to let go.

When she moved her hand to grope for another pillow she was surprised to feel a skin instead of fabric. She opened her eyes fully and found out that it was Lisa she was hugging all along, her hand on the latter's exposed abdomen.

Oh my gosh!

Jennie parted herself immediately. Lisa is still sleeping in a starfish position, mouth slightly opened. Jennie searched for the middle pillow and found it kicked out of the bed.

Was I hugging her the entire night?

She brought a hand to her lips, wondering how they end up in that position. She knew it was her who slept last because she was already hearing tiny snores from Lisa before everything went black for her.

She was thankful though that she woke up first. She's not sure how Lisa will react if she woke up finding Jennie hugging her nicely.

Jennie scratched her head as she gets off the bed. She prepared her things first and went to the bathroom. She stood under the shower, letting the warm water flow over her body. Her mind is still occupied with the scene she had woken up to.

Calm yourself down, Jennie. Calm yourself.

She went out of the bathroom and found Lisa, who was just awakened from her deep sleep, currently sitting cross-legged on the bed and still like lost in thoughts; hair is still messy and eyes are half opened.

"Good morning," Lisa forced to greet her while struggling to stay out of dreamland.

"Morning," Jennie faked a smile. She went to the mirror while drying her hair.

"Did you sleep well?" asked Lisa, stretching her arms out.

Jennie was looking at Lisa's reflection in the mirror. Strangely, although Lisa looks like a kid who just woke up, she still looks cute. "Yeah, how about you?"

"It was fine." Lisa scratched her rib with a hand while looking for something on the bed. "Where's the middle pillow I put here?"

"I found it on the floor when I woke up."

"Oh, really? I remember I hugged it last night. I guess I might have kicked it out," said Lisa, smiling, not having a single idea of what happened. "What time is it now, Jen?"

"It's 9:37."

"What?! It's already nine-thirty?" Lisa panicked. She stood up from the bed. "What time did you get up by the way?"

"About an hour ago."

"Shit, I overslept! Are you hungry now?"

Jennie smiled. "A bit."

"Okay. Give me fifteen minutes. I'll just have a quick shower."

"Okay."

Lisa went out of the bathroom earlier than what Jennie had expected. Jennie is sitting on the bed while watching some Disney movie when Lisa passed by in front of the TV. Lisa's wearing a white v-neck shirt and black shorts, making her look simpler but as charming as always.

Jennie suddenly wondered how many girls in the office would kill each other to be in her shoes right now.

Although she doesn't swing that way, Jennie knew that she's lucky enough to be with Lisa. If any of the fan girls in the office would find out what they are doing, Jennie knew that they'd surely envy her, and some will even kill her.

"Something on my face?" asked Lisa.

"Huh? I'm watching movie, Lisa."

"Watching movie while looking at me?" Lisa chuckled.

"Excuse me," Jennie scoffed, rolling her eyes. "I didn't know I was staring at you. I was lost in deep thoughts."

"Okay, if you say so."

They went out for their late breakfast and walked around the resort after. Lisa brought her camera and took some pictures around the place, Jennie's solo, and them together. Although Irene isn't there and pretending is something they don't need to do, Jennie was unaware that she'd developed a habit of clinging on Lisa's arm whenever they walk. Lisa didn't mind it since she enjoys it anyway.

While touring around the resort, Jennie noticed some random stares aimed at them. Eventually, she realized that those stares were all meant for Lisa. A lot of female in the area have been checking her out. Jennie knew the exact reason why. She can't deny it herself, Lisa is absolutely a catch.

A vendor approached them while they were walking along the beach, "Hey, kid. Want to buy this for your lovely girlfriend?"

Lisa wasn't sure if the old man was talking to her. She pointed herself and asked, "Me?"

"Yeah, who else has a lovely girlfriend here?" the old man answered, his eyes on Jennie.

"Uh..." Lisa felt shy that the man mistook them as a couple.

Jennie squeezed Lisa's arm and answered the old man with a smile, "Yes, we're together."

The old man felt relieved. "Just as I thought."

Lisa forced a grin. Sometimes she doesn't really know what's running on Jennie's mind.

"What do you have there, mister?" asked Jennie.

"Well, I do have a lovely couple necklace here for a lovely couple like you," the man said, pulling out two necklaces.

"Wow." Jennie covered her mouth in amazement after seeing the couple necklace. It's an interlocking butterfly heart pendant necklace.

"What do you think, kid?" The man raised the necklaces in Lisa's face. "Buy something memorable for the girl."

"I'm ---"

"How much is this?" asked Jennie, reaching for the item.

"I'll give discounts for a lovely couple."

Jennie turned her head to Lisa, plastering a could-you-buy-this-for-me smile.

Since they were only pretending, the last thing Lisa expects to happen is for Jennie to agree on buying something like that.

"Y-you want that?"

"Yes..." Jennie's eyes were shining. "They're lovely."

"Are.. you.. serious...?" Lisa asked again. She isn't sure if Jennie wants that because of the design or she wants to buy that just to show it to Irene.

"Oh, come on, kid. Your girl wants it. No need to asks questions," the vendor said, obviously trying to make out a sale.

Jennie gave her a child-like expression that Lisa cannot resist. "Pleaseeee?"

Lisa let out a deep exhale and smiled at her defeat.

After the vendor walked away from them, the two were left staring at the necklaces they just bought.

"Isn't it cute?" Jennie has been locking the pendants together and detaching them repeatedly. "See? They match."

"Yeah." Lisa is just chuckling at what Jennie is doing.

"Now I want you to wear this one and I'll wear this one." Jennie handed Lisa the necklace with the butterfly pendant and kept the one with the heart pendant for herself.

Lisa stared at the pendant. "For the party later?"

"Not only for the party, wear that for the entire trip."

"You sure?"

"Yeah. This is going to be our souvenir for this trip. Let's just make the most of it while it lasts."

The couple went to walk further on the beach to enjoy the scenery. Lisa continued taking pictures. Not too long they saw a small tattoo shop.

Jennie grabbed Lisa's arm. "Hey. Let's get in there."

"You want a tattoo?"

"Let's just get a henna tattoo. I've been always wondering how it feels to have a real one but my mom will surely be mad at me. At least henna would do," Jennie asserted.

"Sure," Lisa agreed. "You go in now. I'll take some shots here first."

Jennie went in alone and found out that there are no other costumers at the moment. She saw pictures hanged on the wall. Most of them were previous costumers who were taken pictures while getting inked.

"Want a tattoo, miss?"

Jennie was slightly shocked when she heard a woman's voice from behind. She turned around and saw a tattooed woman standing.

"Uhm, I just want to have henna."

The woman grabbed something on the table and gave Jennie photo albums. "Let me know which design you like and where you wanna put it," she said, chewing gum in her mouth.

Jennie was a bit disappointed in how uninterested the woman is in servicing her. "Okay."

Right on time, Lisa just went in while reviewing the pictures in her DSLR. "Hey, have you decided on a design yet?"

Jennie continued to flip the pages. "Hmm.. I'm still thinking what's best for us."

Lisa turned around when she felt someone poked her from the back.

"Hey there cutie, want to get inked?" The tattooed woman asked. Her voice went from low earlier to high pitched now.

Lisa, who is popular for being nice, automatically smiled back at the girl. "Hi there..."

Jennie raised an eyebrow. The girl was showing a different attitude right now compared to how she was treated earlier.

"Uh, well, we're planning to have henna." said Lisa, pointing at Jennie.

The girl glanced at Jennie with disappointment and went back to Lisa. "Your girlfriend?"

Jennie raised an eyebrow. She went back to the photo albums, picked a picture, and dropped it in front of the girl. "Yes, I am her girlfriend, and we'd like to have this couple henna tattoo on our hands."

The woman popped a gum as she stared at the picture. It was a picture of two hands holding each other with the butterfly tattooed on them just below the thumb. Half of the butterfly was both drawn on each hand.

"Should cutie here go first?"

Jennie is starting to get annoyed at the woman's boldness. "Yeah."

"Okay." The girl grabbed Lisa's hand to pull her inside. "Come here, cutie."

Jennie watched them as the tattooed woman led Lisa to the area and instructed her to sit on the chair. The woman held both Lisa's hand. "Oh, you have soft hands. Which one should I put the henna on?"

Lisa felt shy as the girl is pressing her palms tenderly. "Ah... well.."

Jennie flexed her jaw. She walked in to sit near them. "Please put it on her left hand. Put the other half on my right hand."

The girl popped her gum again. "With pleasure." She turned to Lisa and asked, "Is this your first time here?"

"Nope," Lisa answered while watching the woman start doing strokes on her hand. "I've been here several times now but this is the first time I'd get henna."

"How long are you gonna stay here."

"Until tomorrow noon."

Jennie was just silently listening to the conversation with her arms folded on her chest.

The woman stopped for a second to look at Lisa. "Oh, that's too bad. You should've visited me yesterday. I could give this to you for free if you went here alone."

"Ehrm... ehrm.." Jennie cleared her throat for a warning. She can't understand how this woman has still the guts to flirt knowing that Lisa's girlfriend --- which is her --- is just standing by.

Lisa noticed that and scratched her head instead. "I really don't have plans on getting henna first. But my honey here wants one so I'll get one too."

The woman didn't seem to mind what Lisa said. She stood up and dragged her chair closer to Lisa. The latter tried to move her body away but the woman leaned even closer.

"Stay still, cutie, it's easier for me if we do it this way," said the woman as she looped her arm through Lisa's and held the latter's hand to continue the drawing.

Aside from the obvious fact that the tattooed artist is irritating, Jennie was also feeling annoyed at Lisa who seems to be enjoying whatever the girl is doing.

"Wait, lemme get something." The woman stood up and leaned over to reach something from the drawer behind Lisa. This move gave the woman a chance to be real close to Lisa like they were hugging each other.

Lisa moved her head aside to somehow give way to the woman. She then accidentally caught a glimpse of the woman's black lacy bra, with her tits bursting from the sides and front of the bra. Lisa tried to move her eyes away but those bumpers are literally right in front of her face.

"Lisa!" Jennie called.

Lisa saw Jennie raising an eyebrow at her. She doesn't know why but she's shaking her head, telepathically tell Jennie that she didn't mean to look at those.

Jennie continued giving Lisa a you'll-be-dead-later-if-you-won't-behave look.

"Okay, I got it." The woman moved back and sat beside Lisa.

Lisa glanced at Jennie again, plastering an I'm 'innocent' grin.

The tattooed woman seems to be taking every opportunity she has. She reached for Lisa's hand again and placed it on her lap, making Lisa's arm touch her bumpers.

Lisa was not actually thinking about the woman. Instead, she's worried how Jennie would think of her. "Uh.. miss ---"

"Excuse me, miss," Jennie called. "My honey seems to be uncomfortable with your position. Could you just go back to sitting in front of her?"

The woman is obviously not interested in whatever Jennie has to say. She popped her gum again but eventually gave in. "Fine."

It didn't take long though to finish the drawing on Lisa's hand. Jennie swapped immediately and got hers done faster. Jennie paid the bill this time. They went out of that place immediately and decided to go back to their room to prepare for the event later.

They are currently walking on the hallway to their room. Lisa was staring at her left hand observing the half butterfly design.

"I have to admit, it looks cute."

"It'll look even better if we do it this way," said Jennie, reaching for Lisa's hand to complete the butterfly drawing. "See?"

Lisa smiled. Jennie has no idea how her simple gestures like that could make Lisa the happiest person in the whole wide world now.

"What are you smiling at?" asked Jennie.

"Nothing."

"Nothing? I bet you're just thinking about that tattooed woman, huh?"

"Huh? I'm not, Jennie, come on."

"Well, weren't you just staring at her bumpers earlier?"

"Those things are in front of my eyes. What should I do?"

"I don't know, but I'm sure I caught you looking at 'em."

Jennie continued walking ahead, both hands on her back. "You know what, I really think your future girlfriend will have issues with you being nice to people, especially to those who are obviously interested in you."

"How can you say so?"

"What do you mean?"

"Why, don't tell me you're jealous?" said Lisa, stopping at her tracks.

"Excuse me, I'm not." Jennie rolled her eyes.

"Oh really?"

"Apparently, you forgot that I asked you to be faithful to me, right?" said Jennie, stopping at her tracks too to face Lisa.

"I know. But you said I should be faithful in front of Irene, and Irene wasn't with us."

"I was just playing in character because I'm afraid that she might still find it out."

"Oh really?"

"What exactly are you pointing out?"

"So, you're not jealous, not at all?"

"I'm not, Lisa. I'm not." Jennie continued walking ahead.

"Where are you going then?" Lisa asked, not moving from her spot.

"I'm going back to our room, of course."

"Going back to our room? Jennie, our room is here." Lisa pointed at the door on her side.

Jennie stopped walking upon realizing that Lisa was right. Her mind was too occupied to even notice that.

Lisa was already giggling when Jennie turned around with a sulky face.

"What?" Jennie asked as if threatening.

"Nothing." Lisa can't control her laughter. She opened the door. "Just get in now, your highness."

Jennie didn't say anything and walked back to enter the room first.

Lisa shook her head, still can't get the smile off her face.

Dude

Immediately after Lisa closed the door from behind, her phone rang. She fished for her phone from her back pocket and her lips curved upwards when she saw the caller's name. She raised the phone next to her ear.

"Hey dad."

Jennie is currently in front of the closet, choosing what to wear for the dinner party. She purposely tried to stall arranging her stuff so she could eavesdrop more while hiding herself behind the closet door.

"Yeah, yeah. I'm already here in Gampo... Well, we arrived yesterday... No, I'm with some friends and Irene... Yeah, the Irene I introduced to you before, hahahaha... Yes, it's her birthday yesterday... Sure, I'll tell her you said hi... No dad, hahaha, we're not together. She's actually with her boyfriend right now..."

Jennie knew that at some point, Irene could've met Lisa's dad. However, it's somehow surprised her to hear that Lisa's father is just okay with her preference.

"Jeez. You're crazy, dad. So, what's your plan for your birthday? Of course, I'll visit you... Just tell me where you'll be and I'm going there... Of course, of course... Okay... I'll catch you later then... Yeah, don't forget your dinner too... Bye dad... I love you too..." Lisa ended the call. She put her phone down on the bedside table and went to the bathroom.

Jennie was getting something from her duffel bag on the bed when Lisa's phone rang again. Curiosity kicked in. Jennie took that opportunity to peek at the caller while Lisa is not around. She saw the familiar picture of Lisa and Krystal with Taipei 101 in the background.

Krystal again? They must be really close. I wonder why Lisa never mentioned Krystal to me before.

She heard the flush in the bathroom and the door creaked open. Jennie hurried to pretend doing something.

"Oh, is that my phone?" Lisa strode to pick her phone quickly. "Hey, Keys, 'sup?" she said, walking towards the balcony door, opening it and stepping outside.

Jennie was left confused inside the room.

Huh? She's okay with me hearing her conversation with her dad but not with Krystal? What could they be talking about that she doesn't want me to know?

"Irene liked your flowers by the way."

"Oh, really? That's nice to hear. How's your trip so far?"

"It's great, and we're enjoying our stay here."

"Wait, wait, wait, you said 'we' or is it just you who's enjoying everything?"

Lisa took a glance at the person inside the room and averted her gaze quickly when their eyes met. "It might be hard to believe it, but I think she's enjoying the trip too, Krys."

"To be honest, I won't be surprised if she does. But what makes you think so?"

"She's in the mood to do everything: pretending in front of Irene and strolling around here. She even asked me to buy couple necklaces and get a couple henna tattoo."

"What? She did that?"

"Yes, she.. requested for it."

"Wow, Lisa, wow. Don't you think it's too much for acting?"

Lisa knew what Krystal is pointing. Although she's having the same notion, she still doesn't want to keep her hopes up. The last thing she wanted to do is to expect something in return from Jennie.

"I know, but what if she's just having fun? What if she's just doing this to help me?"

"Help you get back with Irene?"

"Y-yeah?"

"Do you really think she wants you to get back with Irene?"

"What do you mean?"

"Lisa, if she really wants that to happen there's no need for her to do what she's doing right now."

Lisa knitted her brows. She knew that Krystal could be right.

"My deduction is... I think she's doing that because she wants to keep you away from Irene."

Lisa took a deep breath, inhaling the dusk air scented with the beach. "So... you're saying that Jennie ---"

"I still stand by my own statement, Lisa. I really believe that she likes you."

"Now you're making me smile."

"Ooh, I can tell someone's blushing. Where is she at the moment?"

"She's inside the room. I'm out here in the balcony."

"Hmm. Why don't you confess to her tonight, Lisa?"

"What? Tonight?"

"Yes, tonight. Tell her your true feelings."

"W-why should I do that?" Lisa never thought of doing it yet because she knows that it's really impossible for Jennie to reciprocate her feelings.

"So that we could find out what she really feels for you. Who knows, maybe she's just waiting for you to confess first."

"That's... I think that's impossible, Krys."

"What's impossible? I tell you, Lisa, believe me when I say it's not impossible for Jennie to have a crush on you."

Although her eyes were fixed fully at the beach, Lisa's thoughts were wandering. Her mind is torn between the ideas that Krystal could be right or could be wrong.

"Don't you think it's too early for that?"

"Early for what? You're already doing what a real couples does."

"Not really, we haven't kissed yet." Lisa giggled at the thought.

"I know that, perv! My point is this: do you think you would be able to act naturally if you two aren't comfortable with each other?"

"But what if she's really good at this, the acting?" asked Lisa, knowing that Jennie has a background in stage plays. "What if everything is just a part of the play for her? I don't want to assume anything now. That's suicide."

Lisa heard a loud sigh from Krystal. *"Don't you still get it, Lisa? The fact that she can pretend to be your girlfriend with ease in front of Irene proves that you're compatible with each other."*

"Oh, Krys."

"It's still up to you. I just don't see the point of prolonging it. Tell her tonight. Take your chance. If she rejects you then you can stop being a hopeless romantic and start moving on right away. You may not admit it to me but I know part of you is thinking that --- at some point --- she likes you too."

Lisa took another deep breath. "I think you're right, Krys."

She looked back into the room, observing Jennie who's still busy picking what to wear, thinking if she should really confess tonight.

Oasis Bar & Restaurant

From the outside, a passer by can tell that a party is taking place in the restaurant. There is an unusual gathering of people and sound of loud music inside is echoing. The dinner is set to be an informal party.

Lisa and Jennie went inside the restaurant hand in hand. They were looking for some familiar faces in the area when Kyungsoo suddenly popped out of nowhere to greet them.

"Hey there, cupcakes!" He hugged them quickly.

"How are you doing, Soo? You look handsome tonight." said Jennie after the hug. She can't deny that Kyungsoo is really dazzling in his v-neck striped shirt and black pants.

Kyungsoo felt shy. "Thanks. You look lovely yourself, Jen."

Upon hearing that, Lisa's eyes involuntarily landed on Jennie who's wearing a casual black beach dress. She's already been dazzled by Jennie even before they left their room earlier. She just doesn't have the courage to let Jennie know about it.

Kyungsoo tapped Lisa on the shoulder. "Hey, you alright? Come on, I'll show you your table."

Lisa looked around to search for Irene. "Where's the celebrant?"

"She's talking to some staff for the photo shoot tomorrow," said Kyungsoo, leading them the way.

"You have a shoot tomorrow?" Jennie asked.

"Yeah, but we have different schedules." Kyungsoo stopped upon reaching a circular table. He patted a hand on it to show them that it's their place. "I'll be having mine in the morning and she's scheduled in the afternoon."

The three of them sat down. While Kyungsoo and Lisa were talking, Jennie was thinking of something.

Our reservation is until noon tomorrow. Does that mean Irene still wants to be with us in the morning without Kyungsoo?

"Sup, everybody."

The three of them turned their attention to the owner of the voice.

"Jisoo!" Lisa stood up to give her friend a welcoming hug.

"Hey, dude!" Jisoo hugged her back. "Irene was right. You really are here!"

"Of course. Why would I not be here."

"Well, I dunno," said Jisoo, scratching her chin. "Maybe issues?"

Lisa answered back with a smirk, raising an eyebrow.

"Issues? Are there some issues with you guys?" Kyungsoo stood up to give Jisoo a handshake. "Thanks for coming, pal."

"No worries, anything for Irene and you." Jisoo shook back Kyungsoo's hand. "There's no issues between Lisa and Irene, Kyungsoo, I'm pertaining to issues at work."

"Oh, I see." Kyungsoo looked relieved. "Oh, by the way, are you guys gonna be okay here? I have to leave for now to entertain the others. I'll be back with Irene later."

"Don't worry, we're good." Jisoo tapped Kyungsoo's shoulder. "Catch you later."

"Thanks. I'll see you later then." Kyungsoo walked away.

Jisoo punched Lisa's arm. "It's nice seeing you, dude. When did you arrive here?"

"Yesterday, we drove directly here after work. How about you?"

"Oh, that's nice. I just drove here today. I'm kinda busy lately with my baby," said Jisoo, pertaining to her business. "You mean you got a room here?"

Lisa nodded. "Irene got *us* a room," she said, pointing at Jennie who's sitting just behind Jisoo.

Jisoo turned around to look at the other person. "Oh, hey there, Jennie!"

Jennie waved her hand. "Hi, Jisoo, nice seeing you here."

"I'm delighted to see you too, your highness." Jisoo bowed a little. "Is it just me or do you really look much prettier today compared to the last time I saw you?"

"Oh, thanks." Jennie couldn't understand why a simple compliment matched with a beautiful face like Jisoo's made her blushed.

Lisa cleared her throat.

Jisoo chuckled at Lisa and went back to Jennie. "If I knew you'd come I should've brought Rosé with me."

"Nah, you can't bring her here, dude. She doesn't know that Jennie's with me." Lisa is completely aware that Jennie doesn't want Rosé to know any of

the things they are doing right now.

"Ah, yeah, I forgot," said Jisoo, bringing a hand to her head. The last time Irene and Lisa visited her bar along with Kyungsoo, Lisa explained to her the acting thing and asked her to ride along.

"Are you and Rosé officially together?" asked Jennie.

"Yeah, hasn't she told you that?" said Jisoo.

Jennie shook her head. She knows the reason why Rosé is so hesitant to tell her about it. Rosé is completely aware that she doesn't approve such things. But ironically, Jennie's actions now meant that she'd eaten all her words. Although she's not officially in relationship with Lisa, she's still pretending to be Lisa's girlfriend, and Rosé will surely laugh at her about this.

"Since when?" Lisa followed up.

"A month. We've been like seeing each other almost every day after you introduced us," said Jisoo.

Lisa calculated the days in her mind. If she's not mistaken it was only earlier last month when Jisoo and Rosé had met. "Wow, you're fast, Jisoo."

"Psssh." Jisoo waved a hand. "What's the point of prolonging it when we both knew that we liked each other, right?"

Lisa secretly smiled at that. It's like some unknown entities have been conspiring to make this two people --- Krystal and Jisoo --- tell her something about confessing her feelings.

"You mean you confessed to her right away?"

"Well, you could say that, but it's not really a serious confession." Jisoo shrugged. "I just told her I like her. I had to know what she feels to make sure that we won't be wasting each other's time anymore."

Lisa might seem calm but her thoughts are in chaos. She's not entertaining Krystal's idea earlier but after hearing Jisoo's point of view, she's somehow

convinced that she should do it. She shifted her gaze to Jennie who's now talking to Jisoo.

The party mood has started after the guests had dinner. The sound of the drum beat was louder this time. Kyungsoo and Irene joined Lisa, Jennie and Jisoo after entertaining the guests. It was around past nine in the evening when their conversation started to get more interesting.

"Lisa left that night drunk and was still confident that she could drive herself home. I was asking her to stay in my place since we're both badly intoxicated." Jisoo turned to Lisa and pats her on the shoulder. "But this kid here was so persistent. She even told me 'I'm gonna make sure to call you when I got home,' she mimicked Lisa's drunken tone, making everyone laugh.

Lisa felt embarrassed because she knows the outcome of the story. Irene on the other hand, who's sitting across Lisa, is already giggling.

"After two hours," said Jisoo, raising two fingers, "I was surprised to received a call from Lisa's number. I was like 'Oh, that bastard made it home alive'." All of them laughed again. Jisoo continued after the laughter, "But then, it wasn't Lisa who's calling me. It was Irene."

Lisa and Irene glanced at each other quick.

Jisoo continued, "The moment I answered the phone and all I heard was sobbing 'Uhuhuhu.... Jisoo... Lisa's in the hospital... huhuhuhu.' she mimicked Irene's voice in a funny way.

All of them laughed again especially Irene who's already hiding behind Kyungsoo's shoulder due to embarrassment.

"I admit my mistake on that, and I'm never gonna drink and drive again, ever." said Lisa.

Jisoo nudged Lisa's arm. "Well, you're actually lucky that you didn't run over and kill someone that time."

Kyungsoo and Jennie were the audiences that night. Jisoo keeps on telling things about their college experience. Although most of it revolves around Lisa and Irene, Jennie didn't feel irritated because Jisoo was the one telling the story. In fact, she's having fun hearing more things about Lisa.

Jisoo let out a loud sigh and she played the spoon on her hand. "Jeez! I missed those good old days with you guys," she said, throwing quick glances at Lisa and Irene.

Although it may not sound that serious Lisa felt melancholy rushing down her chest. She peeked at Irene's direction and caught the latter's eyes already fixed on her. For some reasons she felt that it was her old Joo-hyun she's looking at that moment. She shifted her eyes back to Jisoo.

"I missed it too, dude."

"Come on, Lisa. Let's go get some beer," said Jisoo.

"Huh?" Lisa watched Jisoo get up from her chair.

"Let's get something to drink." Jisoo went to Jennie and held her shoulders with both hands. "Princess, could you do the honor of allowing Lisa to drink tonight?"

Jennie smiled sweetly. "Of course. Binge drink if you feel like to. Lisa's not driving tonight so I don't mind."

"That's my girl." Jisoo squeezed Jennie's shoulders and turned to Lisa after. "Come on, dude. Her highness has allowed you to drink tonight."

"I'll be quick." Lisa squeezed Jennie's hand and the latter nodded.

"Two beers, please." Jisoo ordered, playfully tapping her hands on the bar table.

Lisa sat on the stool. "Just two beers? Are we drinking alone here?"

"Let's just talk here for a while." Jisoo grabbed the beer from the table and sip on it.

"But I can't leave Jennie alone there with Irene and Kyungsoo..."

"I just need a moment with you, dude. It won't be long."

Lisa knew it was something serious. "Y-you have a problem?"

Jisoo chuckled while she rotated the bottle in her palms. "I just feels weird, dude," she said, side glancing Lisa. "You two were inseparable before."

Lisa made eye contact with the table. She knew what this is all about.

"And look at you now, it's like you don't know each other anymore. Both sitting beside somebody else," Jisoo continued, letting out a disappointed chuckle. "What happened to you guys?"

It took a moment for Lisa to answer. "I... I really don't know, dude."

Jisoo took another sip from the bottle. "It's just a bit depressing to see you two like this now. Everything was perfect before, right?"

Lisa nodded. Her mind already traveled back in time. "Just you, me, and Irene, nothing else matters."

Jisoo has been her and Irene's good friend since college. Jisoo is also a big supporter of LisRene tandem. Although she's acting like the third wheel most of the time, their days won't be completed without Jisoo in it.

Lisa partly feels she's to blame for Jisoo's anxiety because the *breakup* had cost their friendship too. And since Jisoo is in the middle, she's having a hard time connecting with both of them again.

"It may not seem like it but I'm also affected by the things going on with the two of you," Jisoo admitted. "The sad thing is I guess what happened before will just be a part of a memory."

That statement made Lisa feel sad too. She patted Jisoo on the shoulder to console her.

"Don't worry about me, dude. I just need to let it out," said Jisoo, smiling this time around. "Truth is I'm happy for the both of you. Irene is doing what she really wants. Kyungsoo seems to be a nice guy for her. You graduated college and got a new job now, and Jennie..." Jisoo paused for a moment. "Okay, that doesn't count, you're only pretending."

"Tsss..." Lisa nudged Jisoo.

"Or is it really just pretending?"

Lisa pressed her lips together thinking that maybe it's time to let Jisoo know about it. "Jennie might be pretending but I'm not."

Jisoo, who's about to take another sip from the bottle, stopped with what she heard. "What the ---"

Lisa couldn't help but give out a wide grin. "Yes, Jisoo, yes."

"Are you serious?" Jisoo was even more shocked when Lisa nodded. "Since when?"

"I realized it just this late December."

"How did it happen? Does she know about it? How are you taking all of this now?" Jisoo was too surprised and was unaware that she's throwing in questions all at the same time.

Lisa bit her lip and shook her head. "Nope, she has no idea at all."

"Wow, I see you're enjoying this little acting you're doing now, huh?"

"Sigh. I'm just taking my chances, dude. I don't think she feels the same way."

"Yeah, I remember Rosé telling me that Jennie is not into this, plus her mom's homophobic," said Jisoo, waving the tip of the bottle. "I couldn't

believe it at first when you told me about the thing going on the two of you."

Lisa then realized why Jennie has never invited her inside her house, nor even gave her a chance to get out of her car each time she drives her home.

"What about Irene?" Jisoo threw another question. "I'm not saying that I don't like Jennie, in fact, I think she's perfect for you. But before we jump into that I just want to make sure of one thing: are you really over Irene?"

That's one question Lisa knows the answer. "Dude, I have to admit that I felt something for Irene before and I was badly hurt when she left, but if there's one thing I am certain of at this moment I'm sure that what I felt for Jennie is different from what I felt for Irene before."

"Different in what way?"

"I'm not really sure.. somehow I think that my feelings towards Jennie are much stronger."

"But why aren't you sure yet?" Jisoo raised an eyebrow. It's only been a year since Irene left, Lisa. Are you telling me that you're not affected by her presence anymore?"

"At some point, I still am. I won't deny that," said Lisa, shrugging. "But everything just feels so right with Jennie around. I feel like nothing else matters anymore, and whatever Kyungsoo and Irene are doing, I don't care."

"What if..." Jisoo hesitated at first, "let's say Irene and Jennie both confessed to you tonight, who will you choose then?"

"What kind of question is that? It's too impossible to happen."

"Tss.. just answer it. I don't care if it's impossible or not. All I wanted to know is who will you choose if that ever happens?"

Lisa didn't have second thoughts. "I'd choose Jennie, dude. No questions about that."

Jisoo looked relieved after hearing that. "Why don't you confess to her, dude?"

Lisa can't believe it. For the second time that day, somebody asked her to confess to Jennie.

"I can tell she's into you, and you really look good together," said Jisoo.

Lisa chuckled. "You're not the first person who told me that."

"Then what's holding you back?"

"I don't know. Maybe I'm afraid of rejection? I never confessed anything to Irene before, remember?"

"Nothing ventured nothing gained, dude."

"But I don't have the courage to tell Jennie about it."

Jisoo laughed and grabbed the other bottle in front of her. "Need courage? Take this."

Lisa stared at the bottle of beer with hesitation. "Do I really have to get drunk to do it?"

"Yes, what's the point of waiting, dude? And another yes, because you're very articulate when you're drunk."

"Do I really have to do it tonight?"

"No more questions. It has to be tonight. If that's not enough, I'll get you a courage potion." Jisoo turned to the bar tender. "Could you give us Aftershock party pack?"

Lisa felt it was about time. Jisoo ordered liquor for her to get drunk right away. She bit her lower lip and stared at the bottle in her hand.

Confession

The buddies went back to their table with the Aftershock bucket in Jisoo's hand.

"Let's have some fun tonight, guys," Jisoo said, putting the bucket down at the center of the table.

"Wow, are we really drinking that?" asked Kyungsoo.

"Yes, we will." Jisoo winked. "Sometimes binge drinking has a purpose, guys," she added looking at Lisa.

Irene picked up a shot glass from the bucket and realized what was brought them. "Wow, Jisoo. You really wanna get smashed up tonight?"

"Well, it's not everyday we get to see each other, Irene. Let's enjoy this." said Jisoo.

"But you're still driving home, aren't you?" Irene reminded.

"I changed my mind. I'll be getting a room here for tonight."

"Yeah, you better. I don't want drunk-driving accidents happening anymore," Irene chuckled after saying that.

Jisoo burst into a loud guffaw. She raised her hand to high-five Irene. "That's my girl!"

"Jeez, you guys are bullying me," said Lisa. She sat beside Jennie.

"Are you going to drink too, Jen?" Jisoo asked, handing a shot glass to Lisa.

Jennie smiled hesitantly. "I have low alcohol tolerance. I don't want Lisa carrying me back to our room later."

"Oh, come on. Let's go all wasted tonight." Jisoo insisted, raising another shot glass for Jennie to take.

"Nah, let's not force her to drink." Lisa butted to rescue. "Remember the last time she got drunk in your bar? She couldn't walk on her own because her legs were numb. The next morning, she can't remember a thing that happened."

"Ah really?" Jisoo rubbed her chin. "Well, that's a weird trait."

"Yeah, let Jennie pass for now so she could carry Lisa back to their room," Kyungsoo said which was followed by laughter.

Jennie pulled Lisa by her arm. "Kyungsoo has a point. If Lisa is planning to drink, I might as well watch over her later."

Jisoo's eyebrows rose. "Oooh, that's so sweet of you, Jennie." She gave Lisa a quick glance.

Lisa knew what it meant. She turned to Jennie when she felt the latter taps her arm. "Hmm?"

Jennie leaned closer and lowered her voice. "What took you so long? You left me here alone."

This is one of those moments when Lisa feels like they aren't pretending. "Sorry, uhm... Jisoo and I had a short talk."

"Just don't leave me again like that. Take me with you then," said Jennie, unaware that she's jutting her lower lip out.

Lisa knew that this is a good sign for her confession later. Who knows Jennie might say yes to her right away.

After two hours...

Irene, Lisa and Jisoo we're all talking and laughing like wasted drunkards. Kyungsoo only had few shots. He doesn't want to drink that much because of his early schedule tomorrow. Irene had several shots too but refused to drink more when she felt tipsy. Lisa and Jisoo were the ones who consumed all the remaining liquor. The bar was about to close that night and they've all decided to go back to their rooms.

"So.. we had a blast, guys.." said Jisoo, trying hard to get up from her chair. She walked towards Lisa and Jennie to give both a hug. "I totally enjoyed this night."

"Where are you going?" asked Jennie.

"I need to go ahead. I gotta book a room now..." Jisoo walked towards Irene and Kyungsoo this time, struggling to maintain her balance.

"You're gonna.. book a.. room? Can you.. even walk.. without stumbling?" Lisa is still trying to act cool but she's so wasted at the moment. She knows she got it bad this time because the room won't stop spinning.

"How about you, how are you feeling now?" asked Jennie, leaning closer to Lisa, trying to get a view of her face.

"I'm so dizzy, baby. Ugh... I feel nauseous actually..." said Lisa, resting her head against her arms.

Jennie ruffled Lisa's hair. "Let's get back to our room then. Can you even walk?"

"I don't know.. just give me few more minutes... I'm so dizzy, really...."

Jisoo went to hug Irene and Kyungsoo too. "Happy birthday, Hyun... I had a great night."

"Thanks. You sure you can book a room yourself?" Irene asked.

Jisoo waved her hand. "I got it..." She raised her thumb for an okay sign. She tried to take few steps but she's having difficulties in balancing. She ended up holding onto a chair to support herself.

"I think you better assist her, Soo." Irene suggested, raising her head from her boyfriend's shoulder.

"Yeah, I think you're right. Could you come with me?" asked Kyungsoo.

"I'm dizzy... Could you help her book a room first and pick me up here after?"

Kyungsoo was hesitant to do it alone. Then she saw Jennie rubbing Lisa's back. "Jen, could you help me assist Jisoo for a while?"

Jennie was hesitant at first because she knew Lisa and Irene will be left alone. But when she saw Irene resting on the table, she felt ease. "Yeah, sure."

Jennie rose up from her chair but Lisa grabbed her arm. "Make it quick, honey... okay? I've got something to tell you."

Jennie smiled to herself. "I will, honey."

Kyungsoo and Jennie went to the hotel reception and helped Jisoo sit on the couch first. Jisoo closed her eyes after resting her head on the backrest.

"Alright. I'll talk to the receptionist to book a room for her. I'll be back," said Kyungsoo.

"Okay, I'll just stay here to look after her," said Jennie. She may look calm but her thoughts are wandering far away on the other person she left.

Unfortunately, due to some unknown circumstances, booking a room at this hour is taking them more time than the usual. Jennie is staring at the wall clock near the entrance. They have been waiting there for more than fifteen minutes and Kyungsoo is still talking to the staff.

"Tsk!" Jennie rubbed her neck irritably.

"You seem to be weary..." Jisoo murmured from the side.

"Oh, you're still awake?" Jennie turned to look at Jisoo. "I'm just wondering why it's taking them so long this time."

Jisoo slightly tilted her head to observe Jennie. "You look like you're worried about something else."

"Uh, well... I'm just worried about Lisa. I left her alone there with Irene."

"They wouldn't go anywhere, Jen, they're both drunk."

"Yeah, but Lisa is waiting for me to get back there."

A smile drew on Jisoo's face. She shifted her body to one side to face Jennie. "Are you really worried about Lisa or are you more worried about the idea that Irene is alone with her?"

"Huh?" Jennie surely heard that loud and clear but pretended that she didn't.

"I'm just wondering..." Jisoo's words were more slurred this time, "you two were only pretending in front of Irene, right?"

"Y-yeah, why?"

Jennie pointed a finger at Jennie's henna tattoo. "Then why do I feel like everything was real?"

Jennie was dumbfounded with the question. She doesn't know the answer herself. She stared at Jisoo who's completely passed out now.

Is she really drunk?

Lisa was still resting her head on the table when she felt someone say beside her. She groped for that person's hand and squeezed it. "Jennie... Let's go back to our room now... I've got something important to tell you..." For whatever reason, she feels like it doesn't matter what Jennie will say, she's completely prepared to tell her feelings tonight.

"She isn't here yet, Lali," said Irene, squeezing back Lisa's hand.

Lisa raised her head and let go of Irene's hand immediately. "Oh, sorry..." She went back resting her head on the table as the gravity is pulling her head down. "I didn't know it was you."

"The bar is about to close now. Come on, let's go."

"No..." Lisa refused, "I'm gonna wait for Jennie here."

"Well, I'm gonna assist you to Jennie, Lali. Come on now."

"Let's just wait for her to get back, Hyun... I don't want Jennie seeing us together alone..."

Irene sighed. "I'll bring you to her, I promise. Kyungsoo and Jennie left thirty minutes ago and they haven't returned yet. Maybe something happened in the reception. Let's meet up with them."

Lisa slightly raised her head. "You sure they're still there?"

A waiter called Irene's attention signaling that they are already closing. She went back to Lisa. "Come on now. The staff here already asked us to leave."

"Oh... Okay..." Lisa slowly rose up from her chair. The entire room is still spinning, making her slightly lose her balance. "Ooops."

"Oh, Lisa..." Irene put her arms around Lisa's waist to help her. "Can you walk?"

"I can..." Lisa smiled at Irene, putting her left arm around the latter's shoulder. "This is like the old days, huh?"

"You used to drink a lot before instead of going to school."

"And you used to pick me up every single time, right?"

"Yeah, you're really a spoiled brat." Irene chuckled as she leads Lisa to walk out of that place.

Kyungsoo approached Jennie. His irritation is obvious even with his angelic face. "Phew! They are having a system issues."

"Is it okay now?"

"I'm still waiting for the approval. How's she by the way?"

Jennie looked at Jisoo. "She's completely passed out."

"Geez, they really got it bad." Kyungsoo shoved his hands into his pockets and turned to look outside. "I wonder how Irene and Lisa are doing now."

Me too.

Jennie's eyes wandered somewhere else. The thought of Lisa being alone with Irene right now hasn't left her mind since she sat on that couch.

"Mr. Kyungsoo?" the staff called their attention. Kyungsoo excused himself and approached the receptionist.

Jennie saw the receptionist handling a keycard to Kyungsoo.

Sigh. Finally.

Kyungsoo went back to them with the keycard on his hand. "Her room's on the 3rd floor. Let's get her there now."

"Where are they?" Irene mumbled when they get in the lobby area.

"Ugh." Lisa covered her mouth with a hand.

"Hey, are you throwing up?" Irene panicked.

Lisa placed another hand on her stomach. Her eyes are closed as if she's hoping that it won't happen yet.

"What's wrong, Lali?" Irene asked again. They stopped walking for a second.

After few seconds the nauseous feeling had subsided. Lisa felt relieved. "Please take me straight to my room, Hyun, before I vomit here."

"Okay, try to hold it though for a little while. I don't want you throwing up in the elevator." Irene led Lisa to walk.

"Phew! Thanks for the help, Jen," said Kyungsoo, feeling relieved. "I wouldn't able to do this without you."

Jennie was sitting on the bed and just finished tucking Jisoo. "Why, are you feeling awkward doing this?"

"Yeah, she's still a female after all." Kyungsoo smiled shyly. "I hope I didn't bother you that much though."

"No problem, it's not everyday the three of them get reunited like this." Jennie smiled sweetly. She's relaxed now because she knows they can go back to Irene and Lisa.

Kyungsoo glanced at his wristwatch. "We've been gone too long now. We better go back."

"Yes, I think we should now."

After Irene opened the door, Lisa ran straight to the bathroom.

"Uuuuurrrrggggh!" Lisa throws it all down in the sink just in time.

Irene stood by the door, shaking her head. She switched on the faucet for Lisa.

Lisa washed her face after throwing up. The dizziness had partly subsided because of that. She slowly slid down the tiled wall into a sitting position.

Irene walked towards Lisa. She bent down and brushed her fingers on Lisa's hair. "Are you okay, Lisa?"

Although everything is still spinning for her, Lisa felt something after hearing that line from Irene. She looked straight into Irene's eyes. "Joo-hyun..."

"Come on, I'll help you to bed."

Sorry, we're closed.

Jennie and Kyungsoo saw the board sign on the door. They looked at each other with questioning eyes.

"Mr. Kyungsoo." a man called from behind. They both turned.

"Hey, Paul, have you seen Irene?" Asked Kyungsoo.

"I think I saw Ms. Irene assisting her friend in the lobby ten minutes ago." Paul said, pointing at the hotel's direction.

Kyungsoo and Jennie looked at each other again. "Do you think they went back to our rooms by themselves?" asked Kyungsoo.

"I think so. Irene isn't as drunk as Lisa and Jisoo," Jennie answered.

"By the way, me. Kyungsoo, I need to talk to you something concerning tomorrow's shoot." Paul handed out a paper.

Kyungsoo reviewed the papers and discussed things with Paul. Jennie, on the other hand, is really bothered with the idea that Lisa is alone with Irene now.

Where could have Irene taken you, Lisa?

"How are you feeling?" Irene asked after tucking Lisa to bed.

"My head... It's aching terribly."

"I better go back to my room now, Lali. I don't want your girlfriend to see us in this situation," said Irene, standing up from the bed. She was about to walk when Lisa grabbed her by her arm.

"Jennie..."

"Huh?" Although she knows that Lisa is looking for Jennie, Irene didn't fight back when Lisa pulled her to sit back on the bed.

"I... I need to tell you something."

Irene waited for Lisa to continue.

"I... I... I'm... I'm inlove... with you..." Lisa spoke softly under her breath.

Irene smiled. She cupped Lisa's face with a hand. "You better go to sleep now, sweet-lover."

Lisa didn't react anymore and started making little snores.

There was a long silence in the room. The sound of the central air conditioning running is what produces 'noise' at that moment. It's past midnight and the entire hotel is now quiet.

Irene stayed in the same position for few more minutes, staring at Lisa. She was ruffling Lisa's hair affectionately when she heard a movement by the door entrance.

"Ehrm..."

Irene removed her hand right away and stood up. "Uh... Jennie..." She saw the petite lady leaning against the door frame with her hands folded on her

chest. "I had to take Lisa here because the bar staff told us that they are already closing."

"Mmm-mmm." Jennie nodded. She walked towards the bed to check on Lisa.

Irene moved aside to give way. We thought that we could find you in the lobby but we were wrong. I had to take Lisa here straight because she feels like vomiting."

Jennie fixed the blanket on Lisa's body before she turns to Irene. "How was she earlier?"

"She threw up in the bathroom when we got in. She was so wasted."

"Oh, okay." Jennie nodded again and went back to check on Lisa's temperature with her hand.

"Where is Kyungsoo, by the way?"

"I left him with a guy named Paul downstairs. I think they are talking about the photo shoot tomorrow."

"Oh, I see.."

"Thanks, Irene. Thanks for assisting Lisa here."

"Don't worry about it."

There was an awkward silence in the room after.

"By the way," Irene broke the silence, "I'd like to thank you for bothering yourselves to come here for my birthday, Jen."

Jennie raised an eyebrow. She's not sure if Irene was serious or not.

"I know you have plans that you canceled just to make it here today," Irene added, sounding sincere. "I just want to let you know that I really, really, really appreciate that."

Jennie felt Irene's sincerity, but she didn't let her guard down. "It's okay, it's your birthday. Lisa wouldn't let it pass like that anyway."

Irene forced a smile. "It might be hard to believe it, but Lisa, she doesn't want to be here, Jen. I know it, I've felt it."

Jennie somehow felt bad for Irene knowing that she was right. Lisa didn't really want to go there in the first place.

Irene shifted her gaze on the floor. "She's only here because of you. That's why I'd have to thank you for that, for dragging her along here. It means a lot to me."

Jennie pressed her lips together while thinking of what to say. She feels like she's talking to a different Irene now, a completely different person from the one she talked to last week. Maybe this is the Joo-hyun that Lisa once admired so much.

Because of the silence, Irene thought that Jennie isn't interested in talking to her. "I, uh, I guess I better get going now. Thanks again, Jen," she said, receiving a feign smile from Jennie. She walked to the door when she remembered something. "Oh, and..." she paused for a second.

"Hmm?"

"I know you never expect to hear this from me, but.. thanks.. thanks for being there for Lisa..."

Again, Jennie was dumbfounded with Irene's different character today.

"It may not seem like it, but Lisa, she's always alone and lonely," said Irene. "You might not believe it but I'm happy knowing that there's someone like you taking care of her now."

Irene's eyes reflected her sincerity. Jennie was mute with guilt. Everything Irene is thankful right now is only a play, a show, an act, with the sole purpose of finding out if Irene still has feelings for Lisa.

"I should really go now," said Irene, turning to walk towards the door.

"Why did you leave her, Irene?" asked Jennie. Her curiosity kicked in. She doesn't want to let the opportunity pass.

Irene, on the other hand, halted at an instant, frozen with the question thrown at her.

"Didn't you love her?" Jennie added.

It took few more seconds before Irene slowly turned her body to Jennie. Her face was serious and calm like she's ready to confess something.

Jennie felt the fast thud of her heart in her chest. She took a deep breath to prepare herself for the answer.

Dug! Dug!

Dug! Dug!

Dug! Dug!

Irene ran her fingers through her hair before answering, "I did, Jen. I did."

Sorry, I didn't update last night. I am so drunk and wasted. 🤪🤪🤪 I'll make it up to you. Double update? 🤪

Truth

Ever felt like dying to know about something but too afraid to ask because the answer might be the opposite of what you want to hear?

Jennie felt like a bullet hit her, digging a hole in her chest. Her worst fears had come true.

I did, Jen. I did.

Irene's words continuously reverberated in her head. Her eyes were staring blankly at Irene. What would happen to her now if Irene wants Lisa back? Does she have the right to say no?

This is the first time in her life she felt something like this. However, she's not sure how to define it. Is she afraid? Worried? Anxious? Jealous? What is clear to her is she felt alone, and no one can help her get up, no one but Lisa.

"She was my first love, Jen," Irene continued, her eyes on the floor.

"Unfortunately, she was dumb enough to recognize it."

It took Jennie few more seconds before she even thought of saying something. "Was that.. was that the reason you left?"

"Mmm.. partly yes.." Irene nodded. "I don't see hope in us. I don't even think she feels the same way for me. So when the opportunity for my dream career came knocking at my door I took it right away, without hesitation."

"But.. but she.. she loved you..." Jennie found it hard to say those words.

"She could've, but I'm not sure." Irene shrugged. "She cared for me --- yes -- but I know it was never like what I felt for her."

"How can you say so?"

"Because I've felt it. And when you came into the picture, I saw the proof that I was right."

"What do you mean?"

Irene smiled wearily. "Lisa never looked at me the way she looks at you, Jen."

Jennie was frozen from where she's sitting. She's wondering how in the world Irene can see such things when in fact they are only pretending.

"Which reminds me that I should apologize for my behavior towards you." said Irene, rubbing a hand on her left arm. "I know I've done something to offended you. I'm so sorry."

"Were you... jealous of me?"

Irene chuckled at that. "I don't know if it's jealousy. My pride just can't accept the fact that Lisa took the courage to be with you when you've only known each other for five months. I've been with her for four years and she never did that."

Jennie brought a hand to her lips. She felt guilty again because what Irene believes about their relationship is just a big lie.

"She loves you, Jen. I can see it in her."

Jennie is just speechless, unsure how Irene can see such things.

"There are a lot of things that Lisa had never done to me before that she's doing to you now," said Irene. "That couple necklace, that henna tattoo, Lisa was also never a fan of saying 'I love you' before but just a while ago she told me that she's in love with you."

Ah, really?

Surprisingly, Jennie didn't feel awkward about it. In fact, she thought it was sweet. She knows though that Lisa did it as part of the script.

"Well, she actually said it to me because she thought I was you," said Irene. "I was about to leave your room when she grabbed my wrist and called me 'Jennie'."

"And then?"

"Her words were very slurred though, but I think she said 'I'm in love with you, Jennie.'"

Jennie turned to Lisa with a gapped mouth.

She told me earlier that there is something important that she wants to tell me, could it be that?

She closed her eyes and knitted her brows for a second.

Why are you thinking that way, Jennie? Maybe she said that because she wants to drive Irene away!

"Lisa can be really sweet at times. That's what I like about her." Irene added.

"Yeah." Jennie agreed. Her mind is still lingering on what Irene had told her. Whatever the reason might be, she is relieved to know that Lisa is still sticking to the plan even though she's wasted. "Do you still love her?"

"There's no doubt that I love Kyungsoo with all my heart..." Irene paused for a second to take in some air, "but I think I need to talk to Lisa about this, about us."

Jennie felt nervous at that.

"The reason I wanted Lisa to come here is because I want to talk to her. I should've done this earlier but I can't find time for it. The last time I had was when I saw you two in her apartment. The moment I saw you, I knew it, Jen, I knew there's something going on between the two of you, and so I left right away."

"But we're not together that time yet."

"Yeah, I believe you." Irene nodded. "It's just that you two look good together. I was right. See? You're an adorable couple now."

Jennie felt shy and guilty at the same time. She had to break her eyes from Irene's.

"I'd like to ask for your.. permission..." Irene said hesitantly. "Kyungsoo will have a photo shoot tomorrow morning until noon. I think that's the perfect time for Lisa and me to talk... Only if you'll allow it."

Jennie glanced at Lisa one more time. She knows that she has no right to hinder this talk. In fact, this is the main reason they went there.

"Don't worry, I won't snatch her from you," said Irene, letting out a soft chuckle. "Lisa loves you, okay? I just want to straighten things with her. I can see it in her. She's troubled as much as I am. We really need to settle things up for ourselves."

Jennie took a deep breath. "Okay, I'll leave you two alone tomorrow."

Irene couldn't control herself this time. She came close to Jennie, bent over to give her a hug. "Thanks, Jen. Thank you."

Jennie couldn't react anymore. She felt Irene's eagerness to have this talk. She rubbed Irene's back with a hand to acknowledge her sincerity.

It's all up to you now, Lisa.

"Jennie!" Lisa called. There was an excitement in her voice. She saw Jennie sitting on the rooftop bench of her apartment.

Jennie turned around having that usual sweet smile on her face. "Lisa..."

"Have you been waiting long?"

"Not really, I just got here." Jennie pats on the chair. "Don't just stand there."

"Ah, yeah..." Lisa sat down next to Jennie. "Uhm.. hey.."

"Yes?"

"I-uh... I have a confession to make."

"Really? What is it?"

"Well, for a quite a while now, uhm..."

Jennie's eyes were smiling. "Come on, don't be shy, tell me."

"I, uh." Lisa bit her lower lip first. "I... I loved you for quite a while now.."

Jennie had an unequivocally glad face. "Really?"

"Yeah." Lisa held Jennie's hand with hers. "Are you feeling the same way for me?"

That question drained Jennie's excitement. "Uh.. Lisa..."

"W-what's the matter?"

"I... I can't..."

"Huh?"

"This isn't right, Lisa."

"Uh..."

"Jennie, what's the meaning of this?" an unfamiliar female voice spoke.

Jennie's eyes widened when she saw the image behind Lisa. She pulled her hands away from Lisa's grip. "M-mom?"

Lisa turned around and saw a silhouette figure of a woman whose face is blurred. The sweet mood in the air had vanished. She knows that Jennie's mom isn't fond of people like her: a homosexual.

"This is unacceptable, Jennie!" the woman screamed.

*"Mom..." Jennie stood up from the bench and walked towards the woman.
"Please don't do this."*

"I did not raise you to be with someone like her!" The woman pointed a finger at Lisa. "How are you going to have children?"

"Mom, please, I beg you..."

"No! I want you to marry a guy, Jennie! not a guy-wanna-be."

Although the woman face is blurred, Lisa knew that Jennie's mom was glaring at her. Not too long another figure came out of nowhere. This time the silhouette depicts a tall man.

In just a snap, Lisa noticed that she's already standing at the edge of the building. She's like 250ft above the ground. She saw the tiny cars moving below. The wind is blowing so strong that she'd have to struggle and maintain her balance for her not to fall.

"This is what's right for Jennie," said the woman, showing Lisa her worst nightmare.

The man with the blurred face like Jennie's mom, didn't say anything. He gave Lisa a scrutinizing look as he puts his arms around Jennie's shoulders.

"There's no way I'll allow my daughter to be with you," said the woman who turned her back on Lisa.

Swoooooosh!

A strong blow of the wind hit Lisa, making her lose her balance. No matter how hard she'd tried not to fall, the wind just keeps on pushing her. After a short struggle, the wind won and Lisa fell off.

Nooooooo.

She then had a last glimpse of Jennie's crying face before anything went black for her.

Lisa forcefully opened her eyes. She breaths a sigh of relief with her face in her hands after realizing that she's back to reality.

Thank goodness it was just a dream...

She rolled her eyes after and caught a glimpse of the balcony door.

It seems gloomy outside. I wonder what time is it now.

She turned her head aside and found nothing but the pillows.

Huh? Where could Jennie be?

Lisa tried to get up but her headache started to pound. She let herself fall back heavily on the bed, massaging her own scalp with her fingers.

Argh! Damn hangover.

"Hey, you're up..."

Lisa turned to the familiar voice from the door entrance. She was alarmed when she realized that it's not the voice that she's expecting to greet her.

"Irene?"

"Yup, it's me, Lali." Irene walked towards the bed.

Although it was a real challenge for her to get up the first time, Lisa managed to do it now without much effort due panic.

"Is this your room? What am I doing here?"

Irene chuckled as she sat on the bed. "Relax, Lisa. Relax. This is still your room. And what's with that look? I did not rape you."

"Oh, sorry," said Lisa, scratching her head. Her eyes scanned the area. "Where's Jennie?"

Irene let out a loud sigh as her face becomes gloomy. She looked like she's going to say some bad news.

"Where's Jennie, Joo-hyun?" Lisa asked again, more worried this time.

"She.. she left Lisa..."

"What?!!!"

*Is it because I confessed to her? Wait, did I even confess to her?
Aaaargggghh! I can't remember!*

Irene burst out laughing after seeing Lisa's face. "I'm just kidding!" She messed up Lisa's hair with both her hands. "Don't worry, Lali, she just went outside. You worry too much."

"Ah, yeah.. well.." Lisa relaxed again after hearing that. "What is she doing outside?"

"She went out to leave us alone now."

"What do you mean?"

"She allowed us to have our talk."

Lisa felt confused. She has no idea what happened last night. Everything is still blurred after she got drunk. Just imagine what she's feeling now waking up to this scenario.

Irene glanced at her wristwatch. "It's only 7:30 am, and since you're supposed to check out by 12:30 pm, I still have max until 10:30 am to talk to you."

"I don't think I'm physically prepared for this talk, Hyun. I'm not really at my self at the moment. I can't even remember a thing that happened last

night," said Lisa, brushing her hands on her scalp. After having that dream, all she ever wanted is to see Jennie now.

"I'm afraid there's no other time, Lisa."

"Why?"

"Kyungsoo and I are going back to Singapore after a week."

Lisa's eyes widened. The same old feeling when Irene left came rushing to her suddenly. "You're... going back...?"

Irene nodded. "It isn't going to be yearlong like the last time, it might be for a month or two only, but yeah, we're going back there for some projects."

Lisa brought her hands again to her head. Everything is just coming to her all at once. Her hangover is killing her, her mind is worrying what's going on with Jennie, and now she feels upset again that Irene isn't going to stay for good.

"Suddenly out of my life, suddenly coming back, and now you're leaving again?"

"Lisa.." Irene held both Lisa's hands with hers. They met eyes. Irene brought her hand to Lisa's cheek and leaned closer to press their foreheads together. "I'm sorry... I'm so sorry..."

This is the first time she felt that her Joo-hyun has finally come home. Lisa closed both her eyes and whispered, "What are you apologizing for?"

"I'm sorry... I'm sorry for running away from you..."

"It's okay, Irene, don't worry about it." Lisa pulled herself back. "You've done the right thing. That's your dream, right? I've no right to ask you to stay because your future depends on that opportunity. I never thought I'd say this, Hyun, but I'm glad you took it."

"No... you don't get it."

"I don't get what?"

"I took that opportunity because I literally want to run away from you."

"What? W-why?"

"Because I can't accept it, Lisa." Irene whispered, gazing downwards for a moment. "I can't accept that I've totally fallen for you."

It was a windy morning at the beach and people weren't in the mood for a swim. The sea waves are stronger than the usual. Jennie is feeling the cold wind with her right hand raised mid-air. She looked up and saw the dark gray clouds forming just above the resort.

"It's gonna rain all," a woman said out of the blue.

Jennie knew that the voice was talking to her. She diverted her attention to it and saw the tattooed woman from yesterday. She faked a smile. "Hey."

"What's up? Where's cutie?" The woman lit up a cigarette.

Although this person is kinda flirty the first time they met --- which had irritated her --- Jennie knew she needs to be nice for today because she could really use someone to talk to. "She's.... in our room...."

"You had a fight?" the woman asked, blowing smoke opposite to Jennie's direction.

Jennie shook her head while tucking a stray hair behind her ears to keep her hair from getting messed up by the strong blow of the wind.

"You didn't fight? But there's something wrong with you guys, right?"

Jennie is not sure how to answer it. "How can you say so?"

The woman sniggered and gave Jennie a suspicious look. "Well, it's all over your face, miss."

It is only just now, when the tattooed girl pointed it out, that Jennie admitted to herself that she's not okay. "H-how do I look to you?"

"You look worried to me."

Jennie threw her gaze at the vast sea.

Worried? Maybe.

She's not sure herself why she feels that way. After her conversation with Irene last night, the idea of Irene and Lisa talking alone has been bothering her continuously. She doesn't know why she feels like she's betraying herself for offering their room to Irene. It's like the cells in her body are telling her that she made the wrong decision.

"Lemme guess. There is someone, right?" said the tattooed woman.

"Huh?" Jennie turned her head quickly to the woman beside her, wondering how the woman knew that.

The woman smiled when she saw Jennie's surprised face. "Gotcha!"

"Oh." Jennie rubs a finger on her ear, feeling embarrassed. "Maybe you could say that."

"To be honest, I didn't think cutie is a womanizer. She looks kind and faithful to me, you know?"

"It's not really like that," Jennie clarified. She doesn't want Lisa to have a negative image. "She's not a cheater, don't worry."

"Hmm, not a cheater? So, what's the issue?"

Jennie isn't sure if it's still okay to pretend, but she thought that there's no point if she's going to tell the tattooed girl about the real deal between her and Lisa. "Well, someone from the past has come back to her life."

"Ahhh, I see. You're jealous, huh?"

Jennie swallowed a lump in her throat. She finds it hard to answer the question.

"Ex-girlfriends are really pain in the ass, y'know? Especially if they stayed long together before. It's like you're trying to get in this little space," the woman said, forming her hand to a circle, "that the ex had already occupied before."

"What if," Jennie hesitated first, "what if they were never official?"

The tattooed woman looked confused. "You mean like pseudo-relationship?"

Jennie nodded. "Yeah, and they were like that for four years."

"Gosh, that was long. It's even more complicated than I thought." The woman folded her arms over her chest, raising her hand with the cigar mid-air. "The problem with that setup is they were never official. And because of that, they never also had an official break-up. I can imagine how complicated things are between the three of you now."

"What should I do then?" Jennie can't believe she's asking what she just said.

The woman chuckled. "Why are you worried? You're the girlfriend, right? Don't tell me you're not sure of cutie's feelings for you?"

"I don't know," said Jennie, keeping her head down. *We're not even really together.* "They've been together for four years and I'm just a girl she met five months ago."

The tattooed girl shook her head. "Tsss... The fact that she chose to be in a relationship with you means you mean more to her than that old friend of hers. You should talk to her. She needs you now more than ever."

"Why?"

"If cutie will get confused that's normal because nostalgic feelings will come back for sure. What you need to do is help her realize that she's made

the right decision to be with you. Everything that had happened before is now part of the past."

Jennie stared blankly at the sea. "What if... What if she's not really over her ex yet?"

"You two should talk about it," said the woman, blowing smoke again. "Remind her of the reason why she took the courage to be with you, which she had not done to her ex even they were together for quite long. Both of you should do your part to make it through this." The woman pointed a finger at Jennie's hand and said, "Remember, that henna tattoo won't be completed without its other half."

Jennie smiled as she stares at her right hand.

"Okay, my short breaks over. I gotta go back to work now." The woman threw the cigarette bud in the outdoor ashtray. "It's going to rain soon. You should go back to your room now. Besides it is important that you guys talk."

"I will. Thanks." Jennie nodded and watched the woman walk back to the tattoo shop.

The cold wind blew again, this time with moist in the air. It'll be probably raining any moment now. Jennie inhaled the sea breeze as she contemplates on what the woman told her. She held her right hand and run a finger on the butterfly design. She shifted her gaze and stared blankly at the beach.

Tsk. What have you done to me, Lisa?

Closure

It was raining all day. Lisa was about to go home after her class, disappointed because their school cafeteria had run out of her favorite noodles.

"Ugh! I hate this! My shoes and socks are already soaked!"

Unfortunately, her black umbrella wasn't big enough to shield her shoes from the rain. What's making it worse is her heavy backpack. She hated the fact that being a college freshman means bringing more and bigger books.

"I really need to convince dad to buy me a car soon."

She walked pass the school gate and smiled at the friendly female guard. Instead of going directly to the bus station, she went the opposite path. She still has the urge to eat a hot noodle soup because of the cold weather.

"To hell with wet socks and shoes! I'm gonna have my favorite hot noodles!"

The fifteen minute walk was worth it when she smelled the aroma of the bowl served on her table. It took her just ten minutes to finish it. She left that noodle house with a big satisfied smile on her face.

On her way to the bus station, she noticed a girl, maybe about her age, shedding under a pharmacy store. She looked like she's worried or lost. What had gotten Lisa's attention is the uniform the girl is wearing.

"We're from the same school."

She met eyes with the girl for a fraction of second. Although the girl took her eyes away immediately, Lisa had a gut feeling that this girl needs help. The girl is shedding in that store with no umbrella in her hand, not even one in the area. Lisa decided to approach her.

"Hi there schoolmate," said Lisa, showing her bright smile.

The girl look hesitant but Lisa's charm seems to have won over her. "Hi."

Lisa closed her umbrella to shed too. "I just noticed that you look like you're stuck in here."

"Kinda."

"You forgot to bring your umbrella?"

The girl shook her head as she ran her fingers through her hair. "No, somebody stole it."

"What? Seriously?" Lisa tried her best not to laugh at the idea of umbrellas being stolen. "Where did you leave it?"

"There," said the girl, pointing at the wall. "I left my umbrella there while buying medicine. It was already gone when I turned around."

"Oh, that's too bad."

"Who would steal an old ugly umbrella anyway? Ugh!" the girl yowled in frustration, raising her hands mid-air.

Lisa rested both her hands on the top of the umbrella handle and said, "The thing is umbrella's value increases significantly during rainy days."

Although it wasn't her intention to make it sound like a joke, the girl chuckled after hearing that statement. "Are you saying that my ugly umbrella turned into a pretty dazzling one because it rained?"

"Yeah, something like that."

"Eeeeeee!" the girl yowled again, "I need to go home by 4:30 because Chi-Chi needs to take her medicine on time."

"Chi-chi?" Lisa thought of it as a weird name for a person. "Your sister?"

The girl chuckled in response. "No, she's my dog. She's sick."

"Oh, well, in that case," Lisa paused to lift her umbrella, "I can offer you a ride to the bus station if you'd like too."

"Really?" The girl looked like she found light in the middle of the darkness.

"Yeah, what are schoolmates for, right?"

"Oh, thank goodness! You're a lifesaver!" The girl hugged Lisa without any warning.

*"O-kay..." Lisa opened her umbrella when the girl pulled herself away.
"Let's go?"*

"Uhm, could you tell me your name first my dearest schoolmate?"

"Of course." Lisa offered her right hand. "I'm Lisa. It's nice meeting you....?"

"Irene," said the girl, shaking Lisa's hand back. "My name is Irene, and it's nice to meet you too, Lisa."

Few minutes after the tattooed woman left, the wind picked up and felt heavy. Not to long, people started running for shelters as the dark gray clouds spat out their bids of water. Jennie was staring up the sky, feeling the first few splatters of the rain on her face. Then the rainfall became more intense which made her seek for cover too.

She found herself in the hotel's main lobby. She was busy drying her arms with her handkerchief when she felt a weird feeling that someone is staring at her. And she was right, someone from the reception area is already walking towards her.

"Jennie? What are you doing here alone?" asked Jisoo, disregarding the receptionist and laughed at it secretly. "I went outside for a walk. How are you?"

"I'm good. I'm about to checkout now," said Jisoo, pointing at the reception area. "Why are you alone? Where's Lisa?"

"Uhm, she's.... in our... room.."

"In your room? What the hell is she doing in your room leaving you alone here?"

"She's... alone... with Irene..."

"Are you serious? Wait, did those two asked you to leave them alone?"

Jennie shook her head immediately. "No, it was me who volunteered to stay out for them to talk."

Jisoo brought a hand to cover her mouth and chin, eyes staring away. She mumbled something under her breath that Jennie didn't hear clearly. She turned her eyes back to Jennie and said, "Hmm, and are you okay with that?"

Jennie mentally asked herself the same thing but ended up not knowing the answer. "Of course, why won't I be?"

"Are you sure you're okay?"

Jennie bit her lip as she bows her head to let her hair screen her face.

Jisoo glanced at her watch. "Come on, let's have something to eat before I go."

The rain started pouring outside. Lisa's mind was distracted a bit when she heard the hard pitter-patter of the rain on the balcony door. The idea of Jennie being outside alone started to bother her.

But this isn't the right time to think about Jennie. Irene just told her the missing link that could be the root why all these things are happening now. It's not that she doesn't have an idea about it; it's just that she's not expecting

to hear such confession. If this confession happened a year ago they'll surely end up together. But things are too complicated for the both of them now.

"And even after all that had happened to us," Irene continued, her head still down, "I'm still not sure what you've really felt for me."

"But Irene I ---"

"What, you're going to tell me you love me? I knew there is something between us before, Lisa, but I don't have the courage to make it official because I don't see it in you."

Lisa let out a deep sigh. She knew what Irene is pointing out.

"It's not just about your studies. Like I told you the last time, I don't think you're even serious about me," Irene added.

Lisa grasped Irene's arms with both her hands. "What are you saying? You were everything to me before. What we had before, that was real."

"It may be," said Irene, shrugging, "but it isn't the same thing you have with Jennie now, right?"

Lisa unconsciously bit her lip when she heard that name. She surely knows the answer herself. Irene is right.

"I have all the reason to be jealous of her," said Irene, pouring everything down now. "You were my first love, Lali. I just don't understand how you we're able to stay in an unofficial relationship with me for four years and be with her for real in just few months."

"Hyun..."

"Tell me, Lisa, am I that easy to forget?"

"Of course not. Why are you asking me that?"

"Because honestly, I'm still not completely over you yet."

Smirking with a sigh, Lisa shook her head. "Why.. why are you telling all of these to me now?"

"I just need to let it all out now," said Irene. "I want you to know that I felt like I didn't mean anything to you at all when I found out that you and Jennie are dating. The idea of you getting over me that fast is killing me."

"But you have Kyungsoo, right?"

"I know. That's why I'm mad at myself. I don't know how you could easily forget about me while here I am still thinking of you even I'm with somebody else now." said Irene, covering her face with her palms.

"You think this is easy for me? You have no idea what I went through when you left, Joo-hyun. You don't have the slightest idea how messy my life was during the first few weeks of being alone again. Asked Jisoo if you like," said Lisa, frustrated.

That made Irene look back to her.

"And you might not believe this but you still have something left in me here," Lisa continued, pointing her chest. "It might sound crazy to admit this, but yes, I'm still having a hard time dealing with it especially now that I'm seeing you."

"But you love Jennie, right?"

"I do. But it's confusing. I guess you've occupied something in me that I can't offer to her yet."

Irene touched Lisa's cheek with her hand. "Don't worry. I'm experiencing the same exact thing."

Lisa closed her eyes at the touch. They stay quiet for a while.

"Do you really love Kyungsoo?"

"I do. I do love him," said Irene sincerely. "I may not be as sweet as your girlfriend but he's everything to me now. I might even go crazy if he'll leave

me."

Lisa chuckled. "He doesn't know about us, right?"

Irene shook her head. "I don't have the courage to tell him about it because we were never official."

"It's kinda confusing. We love our partners but we're both not completely over each other yet." said Lisa, looking out the balcony door.

"What I've felt for Kyungsoo is different from what I've felt for you. Both love, yes, but still different. Even so, I won't deny the fact that you still have this effect on me."

"Arg! This is really confusing." said Lisa, pinching the bridge of her nose.

Irene took Lisa's hand and squeezed it. "You don't have to be confused, it is my fault. The problem is I promised you something before, a promise to settle this relationship of ours when I come back. And I think that promise left us both hanging until now, making it a little bit complicated for us."

"I've waited for you because you said you'd come back," said Lisa, dejected. "I've counted each day until I admitted to myself that maybe you're not coming back to me anymore."

Irene held Lisa's face again. "Oh, Lisa. You have no idea how I felt so guilty when I realized that I'm starting to fall for Kyungsoo. I felt like I was cheating on you. And when I first got back here all I could think of is you, us before, and I felt guilty too because I was like cheating on Kyungsoo."

Lisa squeezed Irene's hand. "You don't have to feel that way. Remember, you're not the only one here who fell for another person. I'm glad to see you with Kyungsoo, Hyun. He's a real nice guy."

"You and Jennie are perfect for each other too. She's so beautiful."

Lisa found herself speechless once again. If only everything between Jennie and her is real she'd be happy too.

"I was totally distracted the first time I saw you again," Irene continued. "It made me realize that I can't give my whole heart to Kyungsoo because a part of me is still with you. Do you remember when I went to your apartment and saw Jennie wearing your shirt? My gosh! I was so jealous that time. Kyungsoo and I even had a fight that day because I was totally out myself."

Lisa laughed. "Really?"

Irene chuckled. "Yeah, what do you expect me to feel? I never wore any of your shirts before. I thought she's just a party girl you brought in your apartment. But when I later found out that you're together, and each time I see you with her, I can't help but ask myself all the possible 'what if's': what if I didn't leave, what if I came back on time, what if I confessed to you before: those thoughts keep on haunting me, Lisa."

Lisa heaved another sigh as she stares at Irene. "I wish we could just go back to our college days. Things are so complicated between us now."

"I wish that too, but we can't. What I want to do now is to focus my attention to Kyungsoo so you could focus yours on Jennie. We can't be good lovers to our partners if we're still feeling this way for each other."

"What should I do then?"

"Set me free, Lisa."

"Huh?"

"We should set each other free," said Irene, squeezing Lisa's hand again, "and the only way to do that is for us to officially break up."

"So, you're saying that you and Irene talked last night and agreed to this?" asked Jisoo, stirring her coffee.

Jennie nodded. "She said they need to settle something for themselves. I don't have the right to say no to that. I'm only a fake girlfriend. Besides, I

believe I've made the right decision for letting them talk.

Jisoo carefully lay the spoon on her saucer. "I have to agree with you on that. I really think that those two really need to talk. But I'm kinda worried about Kyungsoo...." she paused before eyeing Jennie, "...and you..."

Jennie grabbed her cup of coffee to break from Jisoo's stare. "Why, do you think they'd get back together?"

"Well, part of me wants them to reconcile and just be like the old days. Another part wants them to just move on from each other. What about you?"

"I... I really don't know what to expect, Jisoo."

"What if they'd get back together?"

Jennie felt something pinched her. It may sound selfish but what she's expecting to happen is for Lisa to move on from Irene and not to get back with her. "If that happens then I guess our play is over."

Jisoo observed her for a moment. "Are you gonna be okay if that happens?"

"Why won't I be okay with it?"

"Yeah, why won't you be?" Jisoo asked her back with a smirk.

"Jisoo, if you're thinking that ---"

"I know, Jen, I know. Rosé told me about it, that you're not into this," said Jisoo, tapping her own knee with her clenched hand. "I just want to make sure you're not, in anyway, affected by what's happening with those two."

"Don't worry. I'm not. Thanks by the way."

Jisoo sipped on her mug and set it back on the saucer. She took a deep breath like she needs lots of air to settle something in her mind.

"You seem to be the one who's worried." said Jennie.

"Actually, yes..."

"Why?"

"I just.. I don't know why, but I have a bad feeling about this talk."

"What do you mean?"

"I have a feeling that this talk isn't about settling something between them, but it could be the opposite."

"I'm not sure I'm following you."

Jisoo looked at the flowing rainwater on the window and sighed again before saying, "You know, the only way we could say hello to the new people in our lives is to say goodbye to the old ones first."

Irene and Lisa were still sitting on the bed, both looking out the balcony door. Lisa had totally forgotten all about her headache. What's been keeping her mind busy at the moment is what Irene just said.

Breakup.

"Do you remember," said Irene, still looking out the balcony, "it was raining too when we first met."

Lisa gazed at Irene for a second as the rush of melancholy had flown in her chest. "Yeah. You haven't changed a bit since then, still skinny as ever."

Irene chuckled at that. "Well, you've gotten fat yourself."

"I still eat a lot, you know."

"Yeah, you better. Who would look after you when I'm not around anymore?"

Lisa felt uneasy with that. "Irene.."

Irene let out a loud sigh. "We need to do this, believe me."

"What 'this'? What do you mean when you said breakup?"

"It means we should say goodbye for now and stay away from each other."

"But Joo-hyun ----"

"You can do it, Lisa. You've made it through a year without me, right?" asked Irene. "And you have Jennie to focus all your attention to. We should do this so we could put an ending to our unfinished book."

Lisa scratched her head. "But why are you talking like we're never gonna see each other again?"

"Because that's what we're going to do." said Irene. "We're staying away from each other for now, until both our wounds would heal and until both of us can accept that what we had before is really over."

Lisa felt her breathing started to get irregular. "Do we really need to do that?"

"Believe me, we have to, or else we will get confused with our feelings every time."

"But Irene, it's like you're asking me to completely forget you..."

"I'm not asking you to forget me. I won't be able to completely forget you either," said Irene, looking away. "I just want to put a closure to this unofficial relationship of ours. It should be clear for the both of us that what we had is over. Let's just set each other free so we won't expect from each other anymore."

There was an awkward silence between them. It's like they knew what they should do but they are both afraid to do it.

Lisa felt Irene's struggle. Based on what's happening now, she knew that Irene is having a hard time handling the situation compared to her. Maybe this is Irene's way of settling things right, of being fair to Kyungsoo.

Lisa exhaled heavily. "Okay. I completely understand you. And yes, you're right. We need to end this officially now so we could both move on."

Irene simply nodded. It looked like there's a lot going on her mind but she can't say it.

"Thanks for everything you've done for me, Hyun, everything," said Lisa sincerely. "I love to have you back again like the way it was before, but I guess we'll have to end our journey for now."

It was pretty hard for Irene to take it first, her face showed it. She slowly touched Lisa's face and caressed it. "It was a nice journey I had with you. I will never forget that."

The room started to be filled with heavy ambiance as the sky continuously cried out. Both of them were silent. They both felt like they were together again and at the same time savoring the last minutes of it.

"Once I step out of this room you won't be able to see me anymore," said Irene. "Let's leave it like that for now. I know we'll meet again someday. We could be friends, or maybe, who knows, if we're both single that time then we know that it's the right time for us. But for now, I think it's better if we stay away from each other's path."

Lisa nodded slowly. She's starting to feel that this goodbye is for real this time. "I... I'm gonna miss you, Joo-hyun."

Irene's eyes widen when she heard that. She looked away. "Lisa?"

"Mmm?"

"Can I... can I have one last request before we part ways today?"

"Anything. Tell me."

Irene reached for Lisa's hand and intertwined it with hers. "Can we just pretend for a while that this is not the ending? Can we go back to a moment when we were still Joo-hyun and Lalisa and nothing else matters? Can we forget about them for now and just talk like the way we did before?"

Lisa surely felt it. The person in front of her is the old Joo-hyun she knew, the Joo-hyun that was the center of her life before.

"I'd love that Joo-hyun."

Irene had a faint smile on her face. "Now, is there anything you'd like to tell me?"

Lisa stared at Irene's eyes. Then she felt that it's all coming back to her. She recalled old feelings like it's the first time, like it's never ending. She remembered the precious memories they've shared before. Everything is all gathering up in her chest. She couldn't fight it anymore. Her arms automatically reached around to hold onto Irene tightly.

"I missed you, Hyun... I... I've missed you so much," said Lisa, voice breaking over Irene's shoulders.

Irene melted inside Lisa's embrace. She closed her eyes and hugged Lisa back. "I've missed you too, Lali. And I'm sorry for letting you down."

"Please take care of yourself. Don't skip your meals like what you're doing before, okay?"

"I won't, I promise I won't." Irene rubbed her hand on the back of Lisa's neck. "You take care of yourself too. I won't be around anymore to take care of you if you get into accidents."

Lisa chuckled while still hugging Irene tight. She doesn't want to let go yet because it felt like she traveled back in time where everything between them is cool.

The two of them stayed in that way for a little while longer, feeling each other's presence while they still can.

Lisa closed her eyes and took a deep breath. She cupped Irene's head with her palm.

"Joo-hyun?"

"Mmm?"

"I love you."

Lisa felt Irene held her breath after hearing that. Irene couldn't help it anymore. Her shoulders moved in rhythm to her sobs as she clutched a hand on Lisa's back.

"Thank you... Thank you... I love you too, you know that right?" asked Irene, her voice cracked.

Lisa can't control her tears to fall too after she felt that Irene broke down, sobbing against her chest. "I'm sorry if I was dumb, I'm sorry..."

After few more seconds of hugging the two slowly pulled away from each other and wiped their own tears with their hands.

"So, I guess this is it," said Irene, still wiping her tears. "Let's not make it harder for ourselves. I should go now before I ask you to break up with your girlfriend."

Lisa chuckled a bit although her tears won't stop falling. She watched Irene rose up from the bed. "I hope you'll always be happy, Hyun. Until we meet again."

Irene didn't say anything and walked towards the door. She stopped before getting out of the room and spoke with her back on Lisa. "Till we meet again, Lali." She went straight to her room after.

After hearing Irene's door shut Lisa felt that a part in her was gone. This time it's for real, they've said goodbye for good. She didn't move for few seconds trying to check if she's okay. She wiped some more of her tears with the blanket.

After 15 minutes of walking, they finally reached the bus station. Since the rain is pouring hard and non-stop, and Lisa's umbrella is too small for two people to share it, both of them had one their arms drenched in water.

"Jeez, we're almost soaked," said Lisa, closing the umbrella.

"It's okay, it won't kill us." Irene walked towards the bench to sit. "At least our whole body was spared."

Lisa remembered her soaked feet to but didn't think of mentioning it. She sat beside Irene. "Yeah."

"Which building are you from?" Irene asked while fixing her hair. "I usually see you in the cafeteria."

"Really? I'm from building C, and you?"

"Yeah, you usually order noodles, right? I'm from building A."

"Those are my favorites," said Lisa, embarrassed.

"It's okay. I always see that excited face of yours each time you get your favorite noodles. It's cute, you know."

Lisa felt more embarrassed hearing such compliment from a pretty girl like Irene.

"Oh, my bus is here." Irene stood up. The bus stopped in front of them and opened its door.

"Okay, I guess see you around school?" asked Lisa.

"Yeah. Thank you, Lisa. This is so kind of you."

"You're welcome."

Irene smiled and waved a hand. "Bye for now."

Lisa waved a hand too as she watched Irene enter the bus. Irene took a seat near the window and waved again. Lisa smiled back at her. The bus started to move away from the station. Lisa followed the bus with her eyes until the image totally disappeared from her sight.

Her bad day had felt lighter now. Her soaked shoes and socks, plus her heavy backpack isn't bothering her anymore. She doesn't know why but she felt happy. For some reasons she knew that this isn't the last time they are gonna talk to each other.

Lisa tapped the tip of her umbrella on the floor as she chuckles and shakes her head. She looked back up to the horizon and whispered to herself.

"Bye for now, Irene."

How was this chapter guys? I feel bad for Irene. No more LisRene. 🥺🥺
🥺

I'm so sorry, Irene. It's not my intention to hurt you. Please don't forget to vote. Thank you. ♥♥♥

Free

After getting the whole resort soaked, the rain outside slowed down to a faint drizzle. People started coming out from where they were hiding. Some kids went back to the beach side to play in the sand and sea water. Even though the rain hasn't fully subsided yet, everything was slowly going back to normal.

It has been an hour now since Irene left and the room is still lifeless. Lisa is on the bed, not moving from the spot where Irene left her, still contemplating about what just happened. This time she knew it was real because she felt like Irene has taken a part of her body when she stepped out the door.

Lisa heard her phone rang. She lazily stretched her arm to grab the phone on the bedside table. It was Jisoo who's calling.

Something from her peripheral vision caught her attention. She saw a familiar key on the table, the duplicate to her apartment door. She picked it up and answered the phone call.

"Hey."

"Dude, what's up? How are you?"

"I... uh, not good? How about you?"

"I'm fine, I'm fine. I'm currently driving back to Seoul. Is Irene still there?"

Lisa clenched her hand with the key in it. "Nope. She left an hour ago."

"Oh. So, what happened?"

"It's over, dude," said Lisa, sighing. "She already returned the key to me."

"Oh. Is she going away again?"

"It could be something like that. She said we should stay away from each other for now."

"Honestly, I was afraid that she'd do that."

"I wish I could do something about it but she already made up her mind."

"I may not like it that way but I think you guys did the right thing."

"You do?" Lisa felt glad hearing that. At least she knows that there is another person who thinks that they've done the right thing.

"Yeah. It might not be that obvious but I can see that you are both having a hard time around each other. At least after this, she can now focus on Kyungsoo completely without thinking of your unofficial past."

"I'm sad, yes, but I have to admit that it kinda felt light at the same time because of it," said Lisa, smiling a little now.

"I'm glad to hear that from you, dude. I'm worried that you'll go through another recovery process again because of her."

"Nah, that won't happen anymore. I'm sorry, dude."

"Huh? For?"

"For bothering you so much because I was so low-spirited when she left before."

"Nah, don't mention it. What friends are for, right?"

"And I'm sorry that our friendship was badly affected because of what happened between Irene and me."

"Psh. Come on, don't worry. I believe that time can heal both of you. It might not be today or tomorrow, but it will happen soon. You two are going to get back together as friends and our trio will be completed in no time, okay?"

The optimism brought joy to Lisa. "I hope so, Jisoo."

"It will happen soon, believe me. Let her focus to Kyungsoo for now and you should focus on Jennie too."

Lisa was jolted back to her senses after hearing that name. Jennie's sweet smile suddenly crossed her mind. Lisa may not have realized it right away but Jennie is the person who made her feel whole again after Irene.

"And speaking of that, I'm actually calling to check on Jennie too. Is she there yet?"

Lisa's eyes automatically searched the room, as if double-checking if she's alone or not. "She's not yet here, dude. In fact, I haven't seen her since I woke up this morning."

"Hmmm..."

"Why? Something wrong with her?"

"I.. uh... I don't know if my intuition serves me right.. but I think... I have a feeling that Jennie likes you, dude."

"H-how could you say so?"

"It's just a gut feeling, but yeah, I think she's jealous of Irene the way Irene is jealous of her."

"How did you know that?"

"I was with her this morning. We had a quick coffee talk about you and Irene. After that, she told me she'd get back to your room right away. I've been gone there for more than an hour now and she hasn't come back yet. I think she's not really okay."

"I... I don't get it, dude. Irene told me she left early this morning to give us time to talk."

"It may seem like that but i think it's not what she really wants to happen."

Lisa gritted her teeth. "Did she say anything to you?"

"Not much. She keeps on saying she's okay but I really think she's not. I can see it in her eyes, dude. I don't mean to keep your hopes up, but I really have a hunch that she's afraid of losing you to Irene."

Lisa rose up from the bed and walked back and forth while massaging a hand on her temples. "What should I do when she gets back here?"

"Observe her first. I don't think confessing is the best way to do yet."

"Weren't you the one who's telling me yesterday to confess?"

"Well, it's a different case this time. You just came from a 'break-up', right? You wouldn't want Jennie to feel that she's a 'rebound'."

"Oh." Lisa scratched her head. "Maybe you're right."

"Just observe her for now. Observe the things she'll do after you tell her what happened to you and Irene."

"I surely will."

"Alright, so... I guess I'll see you soon in Seoul?"

"Yup, yup. I'll see you soon. Thanks."

Jennie is back walking down the beach side that time while enjoying watching the kids playing and running. She glanced at her watch and noticed that it's past 10:30 am. She didn't realize how time flew quickly. Her mind has been totally occupied with her anxiety.

She knew that the talk is over by now as what Irene had promised. However, she's afraid to go back yet. She's dying to know how the talk ended but she doesn't want to think about it because she's scared of the answer.

The sound of the running water from the bathroom is echoing in that silent room. Lisa turned off the shower to check if she could hear any movement from the room. To her dismay there was none.

Lisa went out of the bathroom, dried herself, and changed clothes. She grabbed her phone on the bedside table, planning to make a call, but was disappointed to see Jennie's phone left in there too. She sighed deeply and sat down on the bed. After all the things that had happened, all she wanted to do now is to see Jennie.

11:07 am

Jennie checked her watch after roaming around the souvenir shop, looking to buy something for her mom. She knew she needs to go back now to pack her things. Although she's not really sure why she's acting the way she's acting now, she knows she needs to calm herself down. Whatever the result is, she'll face it with full courage.

Jennie walked pass the lobby, into the elevator, and to her designated floor. There was no one in the hallway when she stepped out to the floor, making her feel more tensed.

She took a stepped forward and felt her heart tightened. Every step leading to their room is giving her harder time to breathe. It was so silent that she can even hear her own heart thumping in her chest.

After few more steps, she finally reached their room. She stood up in front of the door, took a deep breath while staring at the label on it:

Room 707

She raised her hand but hesitated to knock, thinking if Irene could still be inside.

She put her ear up against the door to listen for any sound inside. To her disappointment, she heard nothing but the running air-conditioner.

"Jennie?"

Jennie was caught unguarded when someone from the end of the hallway called her. The voice was soft and low but Jennie heard it loudly. That's the voice she'd been waiting to hear her call her name since last night.

"Where have you been?" Lisa walked towards Jennie, hands holding on paper bags. "I was starting to get worried, you know?"

Jennie's eyes widened, unaware that she partly took a step backward due to shock.

"I was... I was just strolling around," said Jennie, raising the paper bag on her hand. "I bought souvenirs for my mom."

"Oh, is that so? I bought souvenirs too for dad and Krystal."

Jennie knitted her eyebrows. She still doesn't understand Krystal's role in Lisa's life. But then, seeing Lisa's smile made everything felt right again. "I... I didn't see you at the souvenir shop."

"Yeah, I didn't see you too." Lisa turned to the door and inserted the keycard to open it. She went inside right away and plopped down on the bed with her back. "Ooh, I'm gonna miss this bed so much!"

Jennie left her paper bags on the floor, wondering why Lisa seemed so happy. She's now contemplating whether she should ask how the talk went or just wait until Lisa tells her about it.

"Is there something wrong?" asked Lisa, lifting her head.

"Nothing. I just... I just can't believe that two days had passed just like that," said Jennie, trying to avoid Lisa's eyes.

"Yeah, me too." Lisa sat up on the bed, stretched her arms out and arched her back. "This is my most memorable visit here."

Jennie may not admit it to herself yet but she's somehow hoping that she's one of the reasons for that. She felt the urge to ask again about Irene but swayed the idea last minute. Instead, she walked towards her closet and started taking out her clothes.

"How are you feeling by the way? Don't you feel sick or something? You were so drunk last night," asked Jennie.

"I actually had a terrible headache when I woke up this morning."

"Do you want me to get aspirin for you?"

"Nah, I'm all cool now," said Lisa, sounding cheerful. "I don't know why but my headache just went away. Maybe I got distracted."

Yeah, distracted by Irene. Jennie rolled her eyes. "Oh, okay. I'm just worried if you're capable of driving us home later."

"Don't worry. I'm in perfect shape now." Lisa bent her elbow at a 90-degree angle and tapped her biceps with her left hand.

Jennie chuckled. "Fine, if you say so. Just make sure you'll return me to my mom with complete body parts."

"Of course. I wouldn't do anything to hurt you, you know."

Jennie raised a quizzical eyebrow. For whatever reason, hearing the word 'hurt' reminded her of what she's gone through earlier.

"What?" asked Lisa.

"Nothing."

"Uhhh, Jennie?"

"Yes?"

"How did I end up here last night?"

Jennie held the closet door with her left hand before looking at Lisa. "She escorted you back here."

"Where.. where were you then?"

"Well, Jisoo's pretty smashed up too last night so Kyungsoo and I helped her book a room.

Lisa's eyes followed Jennie as the latter is putting her clothes from her closet and arranging each into the duffel bag. "Why didn't Irene help Kyungsoo with Jisoo instead?"

"I don't really know," said Jennie, shrugging. "Kyungsoo asked her but she said she's dizzy. It makes me wonder how she was able to accompany you back here if she was really dizzy."

Lisa tried to hold off her smile, staring at somewhat jealous Jennie.

"But when I got here I realized why she did that," Jennie continued before Lisa could say anything.

"W-were we doing something when you came?"

"Hmm, aside from her ruffling your hair while you were sleeping? I guess none."

Lisa was staring blankly at Jennie, unsure of what to say.

"I don't know if I should pretend to be jealous," said Jennie, tapping her fingers on the closet door. "But when I saw her panicked I realize that I should just act cool."

"So, what did you say to her?"

"I thanked her for looking after you and then she thanked me for dragging you here," said Jennie flatly. "That's when I realized that it's the best time to ask her about you. It turned out that she's also planning to talk to you over this trip so she used that opportunity to ask for my permission to allow you to talk to her."

"And you said yes?"

"Of course." Jennie went back fixing her clothes. "That's what we came here for, right? To settle your relationship with her?"

"Yeah.. but is that what you really want to happen?" asked Lisa.

Jennie stopped for a second. She felt the melancholic feeling from earlier coming back. She continued arranging her back after exhaling her stress out.

"I don't have the right to say no, Lisa. I'm only pretending to be your girlfriend, remember that."

"I know.. but I'm curious."

"About?"

Lisa scratched the back of her head, looking hesitant. "I'm just wondering... If ever.. let's just say that... I mean.. if you were my real girlfriend, could you have said no?"

Sometimes Jennie wonders how Lisa does it: asking questions like that without making her feel irritated. For sure, if other men have had asked her the same thing she'll answered back hard. But it's different with Lisa. Jennie is not sure if it's Lisa's soft voice that does the trick, whatever it is, she doesn't have the courage to resist it.

"I don't know, Lisa."

"Oh, okay." Lisa nodded. She rose up from the bed and walked towards the couch near the balcony where her bag is located.

"But I think I'd be afraid," Jennie whispered out of the blue. "If.. if I was your real girlfriend, I think I'd still allow you to talk to her, but it would really bother me."

That made Lisa look back to Jennie. "Why would you do that? Won't that make you feel uncomfortable?"

"I'd still allow you because I would want you to weigh your feelings for both of us. But for sure I'd be dead worried."

"Why?"

"She came in first right, and you've been together long. How am I gonna compete with that?" said Jennie. Both of them are now standing, facing each other from across the room.

"Are you afraid that I might get back to Irene after our talk?"

"Yes."

Lisa can't control her smile. "Really?"

"IF only I was your real girlfriend, Lisa, IF."

"Yeah." Lisa laughed. "But in case you're my real girlfriend, I'm telling you now that you shouldn't worry too much."

"And why is that?"

"Irene could have taken that space before for years, but it's free now," said Lisa, opening her palms up.

"You mean...?"

"I'm free now, Jen, totally freed from her."

Jennie felt that a huge weight has been taken off her chest. "You.. you guys called it off?"

"Yeah, something like that."

Jennie dropped her clothes and walked up to Lisa. "So.. so how are you feeling now? Are you okay?" she asked, squeezing Lisa's shoulder. She felt worried because everything will be failure if the breakup will out Lisa back in misery.

"I think I am," said Lisa, smiling. "I've never been better. In fact, I felt like I've finished a journey that I've been traveling alone."

Jennie couldn't help it this time. She reached her arms around Lisa's neck and gave the latter a squeeze. "Eeee! I'm so happy for you. You finally made it, Lisa!"

Lisa staggered a little to maintain her balance, involuntarily putting an arm around Jennie's waist. "Yeah, haha! I made it."

Jennie pulled herself away, arms still draped around Lisa's shoulders. "Are you sure you're okay?"

"Yes, honey, I'm fine," said Lisa, beaming. "Thanks for your help by the way."

"You're welcome, honey," said Jennie, avoiding Lisa's eyes. She can't get the smile off her face though.

"How about I'll treat you to a snack in Seoul before I drive you home?"

"Snacks sounds great."

"Alright?" Lisa lifted her fist asking for a fist bump.

Jennie flashed out her sweet gummy smile, bumping her fist with Lisa's.

Jennie came out of the room first and walked straight to the elevator area.

Lisa closed the door behind her and noticed the door across the hallway. It seems like nobody is inside at the moment. She can hear no movements at all. She took a deep breath as she walked away.

Thanks, Joo-hyun.

"Hey, cutie."

The tattooed woman called them as they were walking towards the parking area. Lisa waved her hand. "Hey there, 'sup?"

Jennie instantly grabbed Lisa's arm tightly, hoping that the woman won't tell Lisa about their discussion earlier.

"I'm good. I just came from my lunch." The woman noticed their bags. "I see you're leaving now, eh?"

"Yeah, it's gonna be another two to three-hour drive back to Seoul," said Lisa.

"So, are you two okay now?"

"Okay?" Lisa was puzzled.

"Yeah, we're okay," Jennie butted in, squeezing Lisa's arm against her body. "We're always okay, right honey?"

"Y-yeah." Lisa wasn't sure why Jennie is acting that way. Then she realized that Jennie could just be playing along because the tattooed woman thought of them as a real couple. "Why would we not be okay in the first place?"

"I'm just making sure that you're not having second thoughts about your girlfriend, cutie," said the woman, making Jennie swallow something in her throat.

"Second thoughts?" Lisa glanced at Jennie and went back to the woman. "I wouldn't have second thoughts on this baby here."

Jennie almost melted. She felt her hand being squeezed tighter which made her rest her chin on Lisa's shoulder. Sometimes she's not aware of what she's doing. Her body is automatically doing things out of her consent.

"That's good to hear. Don't make your girlfriend cry, okay?" said the woman, lightly punching Lisa on the arm.

"Haha! I won't."

"Alright. Drive safe. Take care you both."

"Thanks. We'll see you again when we come back here," said Lisa.

After few steps, the woman turned back to them. "Oh, and by the way, I'm not sure if you've heard of this but that design you have on your hands right now, it was once used as a matrimonial tattoo by the first tribal inhabitants of this area."

Lisa and Jennie looked at each other, having the same thoughts on their minds.

Matrimonial tattoo?

"Butterfly totem is a symbol of powerful transformation," said the woman. "It is often used by wedding couples as a tattoo to symbolize their faith for each other no matter what changes they'd encounter. The butterfly spirit will guide your relationship to conquer any obstacles."

Lisa let out a small chuckle. "That's nice. My honey really knows which to pick, huh?"

"I never knew that story behind the design. I just randomly picked it from the album," said Jennie.

"Well, it's a good choice, just so you know," the woman said.

"Yeah, what a coincidence." Jennie smiled awkwardly.

The woman smirked. "It's not just coincidence. You two really meant for each other. Anyway, I hope you both come back here soon. Bye now."

Both of them were left standing as they followed the woman with their eyes, still holding each other's hands as nobody dared to say or do anything.

When Jennie can't handle the pressure anymore, she freed her hand from Lisa's grip.

Lisa pulled her hand back. "Hey. Don't let go yet. You're still my girlfriend until this trip is over, right?"

Seeing Lisa's crooked smile made Jennie blush a bit. "Girlfriend your face."

"Hey, honey, you should cooperate," said Lisa, raising their interlocked hands and pointing at the butterfly design. "You wouldn't want to upset the spirits, do you?"

Jennie raised an eyebrow but eventually gave in. "Fine."

The couple walked towards the parking lot holding each other's hands.

"Drive safe, okay?" said Jennie, bending down to see Lisa's face, her elbow resting on the car door. Lisa dropped her off in front of their house after their snack date.

"I will, thanks."

"Alright, uhm, text me when you get home, okay?"

Jennie saw Lisa's slightly surprised expression with what she said, making her feel a bit embarrassed. But when she saw Lisa's lips curved upwards after several seconds, she was glad.

"Yeah, sure, I will, boss." Lisa's hand rose to salute.

Jennie raised an eyebrow to tell Lisa that she was serious about it. "Cool. I'll see you tomorrow. Bye." She pushed the door closed.

"How was your trip?"

Jennie almost jumped when she unexpectedly heard her mom's voice. She didn't notice that her mom is sitting on the couch, reading magazines, when she entered the door.

"Oh, hi mom. It was great," said Jennie, giving her mom a quick hug and peck on the cheek.

"I can tell. You look so cheerful now."

"Do I?"

"Yeah. I think you should do that once in a while. You're overly attached with your work," said the older woman who's busy scanning the magazine she's holding. "By the way, how come you never invite your friend inside?"

"Uhm, she's always in a hurry and she's pretty tired now," Jennie replied quick, putting a hand on her neck.

"Well you should invite her next time," her mom said as she flipped another page. "I always see that red Suzuki Swift dropping you off here but I've never seen your friend once."

"I'll invite her in next time."

Jennie was glad that her mom didn't say anything after that. She excused herself and hurried back to her room. She arranged her stuff and went to the bathroom for a quick warm shower. After she went out the first thing she checked is her mobile phone.

Hmm, no text messages? Isn't she home yet?

She dropped her phone on her bed and walked towards the veranda. The events in the resort were running on her mind while she's drying her hair with a towel. She didn't regret pretending to be Lisa's girlfriend because the confusing past between Irene and Lisa has finally been resolved. Lisa has finally been freed from her hopeless agony of waiting for Irene.

Before her thoughts could drift further, Jennie heard her message alert tone. She strode excitedly to grab her phone. A smile drew on her face when she finally saw Lisa's name. She sat on the bed to check the message.

"I'm home, boss. "

Jennie giggled. Trying to suppress a squeal from coming out. She can't get over the idea that Lisa obeyed her. She typed in her reply quickly but eventually stopped.

Wait, should I reply right away? Would that give her an impression that I was waiting for her message?

She reclined back on her bed and decided to delete her composed message.

She spent the next five minutes flipping her phone on her hand, hoping to receive another message.

I'll surely reply after another text.

After ten more minutes, there was no message. Out of the blue, the phone rang.

Jennie jumped out of the bed and stared at Lisa's name flashing on her phone screen.

What should I do?

She walked panicky around her room with her hand raising the phone to her face.

Should I answer it?

Soon, she realized that she should answer it before Lisa decides to cancel the call. She pressed the answer button and it took like five seconds for her to put the phone next to her ear.

"He-llo?"

"Hey."

"Lisa..." Jennie bit her lower lip to hold her smile.

"Hi."

"W-why did you call?"

"Uh, well... I'm checking if you received my message. I texted you like fifteen minutes ago."

"Ah, yeah, well, uhm... I just read it. I was busy downstairs and just got here in my room."

"Oh, I see.."

There was a brief silence after that. Jennie doesn't know what to respond so she waited for Lisa to speak again.

"I guess you're still busy? I don't want to bother you for now."

"Wait, Lisa..."

"Yes?"

"Uhm, how are you? Are you tired?"

"Yeah. I'm dead tired. I haven't moved from the couch since I got here. I might doze off here, haha!"

Jennie smiled as the image of Lisa lying on the sofa formed on her mind. "I guess driving has finally taken its toll on you, huh?"

"It's alright. I enjoyed the entire trip. How about you?"

"Of course, I enjoyed it a lot. It was the most memorable trip I've gone so far."

"Really?"

"Yeah. I don't get out much, you know," said Jennie, finally settling back on her bed. "Thanks for taking me there."

"I'm so honored to be part of the most memorable trip. I should be the one thanking you for what you did. You convinced me to go there, remember?"

"It is because the second time we met, Irene gave me a feeling that she's jealous of me. And I was right. Everything went well in the end, right?"

"Yeah, yeah. Oh, by the way..."

"Yes?"

"Since the trip is over, would that make you my fake ex-girlfriend?" The question was followed by a loud laughter on the other end of the line.

Jennie covered her mouth with her hand when she laughed. "You're crazy, Lisa!"

"Hey, pretending wasn't my idea. If I'm crazy, I believe I'm less crazy than you are."

"But we handled that one perfectly, right?"

"Surprisingly, yes. It's mostly because of you. Your acting is convincing. I thought it'll be awkward for us to continue pretending."

"Well, you made it less awkward for me."

"But you're still the best actress, haha!"

"Crazy."

"Seriously, though, I can't imagine doing it with Rosé, even with Krystal. It'll be hella awkward."

"Really?" Jennie was glad to hear that.

"Yeah. Could it be that the spirits are guiding us in our acting? Hahahaha! What do you think, honey?"

Jennie surely missed hearing that endearment from Lisa. "Yah! You better go to sleep now, I bet you're tired."

"Yeah. I really am. I'll see you tomorrow then."

"Okay. I had fun. Thanks."

"Me too. Goodnight, baby." Lisa giggled.

Jennie giggled in response. "Goodnight, honey."

Hangover

Although she had a busy weekend, her excitement to go to the office that morning didn't trail off. Jennie woke up in high spirits, welcoming the rainy morning cheerfully. After their fun dinner and late conversation last night, she can't help but smile to herself at the idea that she's going to see Lisa again soon.

She immediately checked the list of her online friends when she got in the office. She was glad to see Lisa's already in but has been idle for seven minutes.

She might be in the pantry.

She went to the ladies' room first to check herself. She went back to her station and grabbed her tumbler for her morning coffee.

Someone went out of the pantry just before she pushed the door in. She heard Lisa and Rosé's laughter from the inside.

She hesitated to go in for a minute. She stepped back and leaned against the wall, holding the tumbler in her left hand and tapping her fingers on it.

You can do this, Jennie.

She panicked when someone went out again. Fortunately, it was someone else. After feeling weirded out with herself, she finally decided to go in. Jennie pushed the door and got a glimpse of Lisa and Rosé sitting at the table. Rosé is facing the door entrance while Lisa is in front of her.

"Good morning, Jennie!" Rosé shouted, making the other people in the pantry turn their attention to her.

"Morning." Jennie smiled awkwardly at Rosé. She saw how Lisa's head turned around to check on her.

"Good morning." said Lisa, casually resting her arm on the backrest.

"Hi, Lisa." Jennie smiled but totally avoided meeting Lisa's eyes. She walked directly to the vending machine and pressed the coffee button. "What are you two doing here? And Rosé, you're early, huh?"

"Lisa and I are having our breakfast," said Rosé. "And as for your next question, well, somebody picked me up and drove me here this morning." The statement was followed by a flirty giggle.

"Somebody?" Jennie raised an eyebrow. She knew who it was. She grabbed her tumbler and walked towards the table. "Is that person the reason for your undeniably cheery aura today?"

Rosé couldn't react and blushed instead.

"Should we call that somebody as Jisoo?" said Lisa.

"Eeeee, Lisa!" Rosé hit Lisa's arm playfully. "Since when you two are on the same team?"

"Same team?" asked Jennie.

"You two are ganging up on me..." Rosé whined, looking up at Jennie and glancing at Lisa after.

"No we're not." Lisa waved a hand.

Jennie sat down beside Lisa. "It's pretty obvious, Rosé, don't worry. It's not like I never had an idea about it."

Rosé reached for Jennie's hand on the table. "Sorry, I didn't tell you. I was afraid you're going to judge me..."

"Psh... It's alright, Rosé. In fact, I'm happy," said Jennie. "I think it's time for you to be in a serious relationship now."

"Really?" Rosé squeezed Jennie's hand. "Wow, this is amazing, Jen. I thought you don't approve such things?"

"Don't worry about it." Jennie gave the sincerest smile she could before she turned to Lisa. "What are you eating?"

"Chicken fillet with rice," said Lisa, pointing at her meal. "I bought it from a newly opened restaurant near my place. Want a bite?"

Jennie put her tumbler down on the table. "I'm glad you're eating some real breakfast today." She pulled her chair to lean closer and grabbed Lisa's fork to plant it into one of the chicken strips.

Lisa pulled her body a bit away from the table to give room for Jennie. "Yeah, I don't want boss getting mad at me, y'know."

Jennie chuckled as she took a bite of the chicken. "Hmm, this is nice."

"Is that boss your girlfriend, Lisa?" asked Rosé. Jennie choked a bit.

"Ah, no, Rosé. She's a good friend of mine."

"She was the one who requested for you to get a haircut, right?"

"Yup, same person."

Rosé folded her arms on the table. "A special friend of yours, perhaps?"

"Yeah, you could say that."

"Is she pretty?"

"Uh, yes."

Jennie continued to munch Lisa's food. Pretending not to hear whatever the two are talking about.

"Are you sure you're only friends?" Rosé kept on grilling.

"We're just friends, Rosé." said Lisa, secretly hoping it'll be more than that.

"Hmm, but why do I have a feeling that you like that friend of yours?"

Jennie coughed. Good thing she has a small deal of food in her mouth, otherwise she might have spat those on Rosé's face.

"Hey, are you alright?" Lisa rubbed Jennie's back and pushed the glass of water to her.

"Yeah. Sorry, something was just stuck in my throat." Jennie grabbed the water and drank it all up.

Lisa went back to Rosé after Jennie had recovered. "Where were we again?"

"I was saying that I have a feeling that you are crushing on your boss, Lisa." Rosé reiterated.

Lisa's jaw dropped. "W-what makes you think so?"

"Well, look at yourself in the mirror," said Rosé chuckling. "You're blushing."

Jennie was still holding the glass of water against her cheek when she was tempted to look at what Rosé was pointing. Rosé was right, Lisa's cheeks were red. Jennie smiled at the sight of embarrassed Lisa.

"Hey, Lisa, this is really delicious." said Jennie, butting in to rescue. She scooped a spoonful of rice in Lisa's mouth. She needed to change the topic because it's getting more and more awkward for the both of them.

"Not mbad, wayt?" said Lisa between bites. She knew what Jennie is trying to pull so she rode along.

"Yeah. It's nice. We should hang out there some time with Jisoo too. What do you think, Rosé?" said Jennie.

Rosé had a serious look on her face. "Hmmmm.... I think..."

"What?" Jennie and Lisa asked in unison.

Rosé brought a hand on her chin and shoot a suspicious looks at the two people in front of her. "I think there is something peculiar between you

two..."

Lisa and Jennie were frozen. The only thing that they have in mind right now is if Jisoo had told Rosé everything.

"How so?" Lisa bravely asked.

"Since when you become THAT close?" asked Rosé, putting emphasis on the word.

"Close? What do you mean?" asked Jennie.

"You, feeding Lisa? When did this start to happen?"

"Just now," said Jennie, acting cool. "I'm planning to feed you too in a while, don't worry."

Lisa was just silent, unsure of what to say.

"It's not just that, Jen..." said Rosé, still skeptical.

"What else then?" asked Jennie, taking another bite of the chicken so it won't be obvious that she's fidgeting.

"I don't know. There's just something different..."

"Like?"

"Like look at how you sit next to each other now, elbows touching and all that sweetness.." said Rosé, gesturing her hands at them. "And you both looked comfortable around each other. Am I missing something here?"

Jennie pulled herself back slowly after realizing how close her body is to Lisa. "Well, we're friends, Rosé. Of course, we're comfortable with each other." said Jennie.

"Yeah. It's just the same thing like how you're comfortable with me," Lisa agreed meekly.

"Yeah, but.. something's just different... Oh, is that a tattoo on your hand, Jen?" asked Rosé..

Jennie was glad it was raining that morning and Lisa was wearing a hoodie jacket with built-in gloves, hiding the henna on her hand.

"Nope, just henna. It'll wear off in few days," said Jennie.

Rosé held Jennie's right hand to observe the design closely. "It looks so cute. I never thought you're the type of person who wants things like this."

"Umm, I was hanging out with some friends yesterday and they all had this. I couldn't say no." Jennie lied.

"Really, Jen, you're hanging out? That's a miracle. You never liked going out that much, right?"

"Yeah."

"I think something just changed with you, and I don't know what that is," said Rosé, eyeing Lisa. "Whatever that change is, I think it is good. You even approved me and Jisoo without cringing."

"Oh, come on, Rosé. I love you. Of course, I'll accept whoever you want as a partner." Jennie was thankful that the topic has been changed.

"Thanks Jennie. How about you, Lisa? Do you love me too?" asked Rosé, acting like a baby.

"You are my friend here in the office plus you're my best friend's girlfriend. I don't have any reason not to care for you," said Lisa.

Rosé brought her hand over her heart. "Aww. That's so touchy. Do you love Jennie too?"

"Oh, come on, Rosé. Stop that." Jennie protested.

"What? It's just a simple question, Jen. What's wrong?"

"Then why are you asking something like that to Lisa about me?"

"Why, are you feeling awkward about it?"

"Yeah. A bit." Jennie looked away. "We're not together, Rosé, just to clarify."

Lisa sighed.

"Hey, I'm not talking about being attracted romantically," said Rosé, obviously enjoying teasing Jennie. "I'm just asking her if she loves you as a friend, why are you reacting like that?"

"Because I've known you for more than two years now and I know that you really meant something else, Rosé."

"Maybe yes, maybe no.." Rosé gave her a smile which made Jennie think that she's in for a private interrogation later.

Wanting to exit the grilling, Lisa checked her wristwatch. "Uhm, I think I need to go back to my station now, it's almost eight o'clock." The only thing she wants to do now is to call Jisoo to make sure that she won't spill anything to Rosé.

Both girls nodded and stood up from their chairs.

Jennie was troubled the entire day because Rosé had been teasing her about Lisa. She's starting to think that maybe she should avoid Lisa for now until the issue subsides. But then, after all that had happened, she knows that she doesn't have enough courage to stay away from Lisa anymore.

She made up excuses during their lunch just to avoid going out with Rosé alone. She knows that Rosé is itching to have some "girl talk" with her. It's too early for interrogation now. She hasn't planned anything to say yet in case Rosé asked her again. And what if Jisoo has already told Rosé everything? How will she explain the fact that she volunteered to be Lisa's fake girlfriend?

Office hours are finally over. Jennie was glad she escaped Rosé the entire day. After retouching a little in the ladies' room, she grabbed her shoulder bag quick and readied herself to go home straight.

As she was about to exit the ladies' room she saw Rosé coming in.

"Jennie! Are you going home now?"

"Oh, Rosé, hi there." Jennie faked a smile so it won't be too obvious that she's in a hurry. "Yes, I'm about to go home." She held her bag and started to walk towards the door, hoping that she could just pass by Rosé without any problem.

Rosé purposely blocked Jennie's way. "You seem to be in a hurry."

"Not really... I just want to go home early. It's raining all day and I want to avoid rush hour."

"Can't you wait for me for five minutes? Let's go down together."

Jennie knew she can't escape anymore. The most she could hope is for Rosé not to ask her questions.

Rosé walked in and put down her shoulder bag on the counter. Before looking at herself in the mirror, which is her usual habit, she peeked into each cubicle to see if anyone is in there.

Jennie noticed it. She had an idea of running away if Rosé decided to pee.

"Okay, all clear..." Rosé mumbled. "It seems like we're all alone here."

Jennie leaned back on the tiled wall beside the hand dryer.

"So..." Rosé opened her bag to get her hairbrush out. "There's something I've been itching to ask you, Jen."

Jennie gulped. She can see Rosé in the mirror. "What is it?"

"I'm sure you know what it is about," Rosé smiled as she combs her hair.

"Oh, come on, are you sure you want me to ask it to you directly?"

Jennie doesn't want to give in. Even though there's only a tiny chance for it, she's hoping it's not about Lisa. "What is it about anyway?"

Rosé just finished putting a clip on her hair first before turning to Jennie. "Do you like Lisa?"

Jennie felt her nervousness level rise. She looked around the area first to make sure that nobody is around. She'll be dead if any of the fan girls would hear that conversation.

"I don't know what you're talking about. Where did you get that notion?"

"Would you believe me if I told you that your body language says it all?" said Rosé.

"What's different in my body language?"

"It's not just you, you know..." Rosé was putting on some pressed powder on her face this time. "Lisa's body language sends the same vibe."

"Lisa? How?"

Lisa started acting differently when you came earlier. You know, like a teenager who's conscious after seeing her crush."

Jennie pressed her lips together to hold off her smile at this newfound information.

"It's like you can read each other's minds," said Rosé, looking at Jennie. "One moves and the other moves too. You don't need to tell each other what you would do. Everything is just mutual."

"In other words, like you said, we look totally comfortable around each other, right?"

"It's not just about being comfortable, Jennie, but it's... it's sweet..."

Jennie didn't know how to defend herself with what Rosé said.

Rosé was leaning over so she could look at her face closely in the mirror. "You should have seen how you guys looked earlier; like a real couple."

"But that doesn't mean I like her, Rosé. I admit I'm comfortable around her, but I don't like her," said Jennie, thinking that it's probably just a hangover from the acting they've done.

"Oh, sweetie, no woman in this office doesn't like Lisa."

Jennie rolled her eyes. "I have to admit she's charming, okay. I won't deny that. But I don't like her the way you or the other girls like her."

"Are you sure about that?"

"Yes."

"Why are you so being hard on yourself, Jen? I thought you're okay with Jisoo and me?"

"What do Jisoo and you have to do with Lisa and me?"

"Well, I just thought that you're okay now to be in that kind of relationship."

Jennie stared blankly at the design on Rosé's blouse. She knew herself that the moment she pretended to be Lisa's girlfriend she already entertained the idea of being in a relationship with a woman.

"Or are you just still afraid of what your mom would say?" asked Rosé.

Jennie looked up and met Rosé's eyes. She shook her head no to disagree. Aside from that, she doesn't know what to say anymore.

Rosé held both Jennie's hands. "What are you afraid of? People judging you, your mom, or yourself? I'm gonna tell you what you just told me earlier. I think it's time for you to let yourself be in a serious relationship now. Just remember that whoever you choose, I won't judge you."

Jennie gave a nod.

Rosé smiled and went to her bag to zip it. "Just remember I'm always here in case you've decided that you're ready to talk about it, hmm?"

Jennie felt a tap on her shoulder as Rosé walked past her to the door.

Rosé turned quick after noticing that Jennie isn't moving from her spot. "Come on now. Jisoo is waiting for me downstairs."

"Oh, okay." Jennie grabbed her bag and head out the room.

Sorry for the boring chapter and late update. Lol. Been busy this weekend and this past two days, my training with my new job started. Anyways, I'm going to add another two characters. I want to add Somi but can you suggest for her partner? Thank you. ♥

Interns

After two more weeks, February has finally arrived. Their office is now filled with heart and Cupid designs hanging from the main door entrance, the walls, and some on the ceiling.

"What are you girls bringing on the 14th?" asked Suho, cutting his cupid as neatly as he can. Rosé and Jennie are helping him design their bays.

"Of course, chocolates," said Rosé, dropping her scissors on her table to take a look at the finished cupid she'd made.

"Chocolates? Whom are you gonna give it to?" asked Suho. "To be honest, there are no guys here worthy of chocolates except for Kai."

"You have a point, Suho. But I will still give chocolates to all my male friends here in the office, especially you.." said Rosé, giving Suho a seductive look.

"Ew, Rosé! Gross! I wouldn't do that to you! Yuck!"

"What do you want me to give you then, flowers? That would be awkward." said Rosé laughing.

"No need, Rosé. My Valentine's is warm this year. I have a boyfriend who will buy me flowers for that day." said Suho proudly.

"Well, FYI, I'm not single myself so I wouldn't be lonely too."

Rosé and Suho then realized that there's still another person in the area who's listening to them while busy cutting her cupid.

"What?" Jennie stopped cutting when she felt that Rosé and Suho were looking at her.

"You still don't have a boyfriend, Jennie, do you?" asked Suho, dragging his swivel chair closer to Jennie.

"Nope. Is there a problem with that?" asked Jennie.

"Mm, no, but I'm a bit worried about you, sweetie."

"I'm not lonely, Suho, if that's what you want to know."

"Why are you still single anyway?"

Jennie sighed. This is the time of the year when everyone is always asking her about her status. "It's my choice."

"We're just wondering," said Suho, glancing at Rosé quickly and going back to Jennie, "I've known you for more than two years now and you never had a date in any of those Valentine's before."

"Suho, you know Jennie isn't the type of person who'll say yes to any suitors, right? It's not like no one has invited her." said Rosé.

"I'm just curious, why is it that none of your past suitors were good enough for you?" asked Suho.

"I just haven't found the right one yet, Suho. I don't want to rush into things," said Jennie, going back to cutting her cupid.

"What if the right one had already passed but you missed your chance because you're too naive?"

Jennie dropped her hands on her lap. "Naive? I don't think so."

"Or what if the right one is already there but you just won't admit it to yourself?" Rosé butted, reminding Jennie of the conversation they had last time.

Suho turned to Rosé, surprised. "Wow! Is it true, Rosé? There is someone special?"

Jennie shot Rosé a death glare while Suho wasn't looking.

"It's nothing, Suho. I was just teasing her," said Rosé, getting the message.
"By the way, who do you think is gonna get the most chocolates and flowers this time?"

"For the girls, I'd still root for Jennie." Suho answered immediately.
"Everyone knows she's still single, that adds up to the excitement."

"Why are you two talking like it's some kind of competition?" asked Jennie.
"It doesn't matter who gets more. It's all about expression of care or appreciation towards another, right?"

"Point taken. But you have to admit, girl, you got quite a lot of attention last year." said Suho.

"Yeah, her secret admirers are suddenly popping out of nowhere during Valentine's. I think she got the most flowers last year," said Rosé, looking up at the ceiling to mentally count the flowers Jennie got.

"I got few flowers, okay? But it's not as many as you were saying. You guys are exaggerating," said Jennie, hissing.

"How 'bout the chocolates, who do you think will receive the most?" Suho asked them. "Last year, if I'm correct, Kai got like 15 chocolate bars on his table when he came."

"And four of them were yours, right?" said Rosé.

Suho raised both his hands, palms open. "I'm over him, Rosé. I'm so over him. I'm not giving chocolates to anyone now except my love."

"Besides, I think the one that will get the most chocolates today is not a man," said Rosé, making Suho and Jennie look at her. She nudged her lips towards the hallway where two people were passing by. Lisa and Tzuyu were walking, holding their tumbler in their hands.

"Ooh. I must admit, that Lisa had really shaken this office when she came. A lot of ovaries had exploded." said Suho.

"Well, I'm preparing something for her too," said Rosé, wiggling her chair.

Suho turned his chair to face Rosé. "Yah! You're a cheater, Rosé!"

"Why is it cheating? Lisa is just my friend!"

Jennie was not in the mood to listen to the two arguing. She is busy watching Lisa and Tzuyu. It looks like they were talking about something funny. Lisa's eyes seemed smiling and Tzuyu is surprisingly smiling too.

She's wearing that bucket hat again.

Jennie followed the two with her eyes until they entered the pantry. After the pantry door latched, she raised the cupid design she's been cutting to observe it. Then she smiled.

"Good morning, Ms. Jennie Kim."

Jennie was writing something on her notebook when the HR personnel, whom she always forgets the name, called her.

"Hey. How may I help you.. um.. wait, who are these lovely people?"
Jennie noticed two new faces along with the HR personnel.

The lady personnel held the two people by their shoulders. "They are our new interns. I'd like you to meet Somi," she said gesturing to the girl on her left. She then turned to the man on her right side and said, "And this is Bambam. They'd be staying with us for one month."

They greeted each other with a wai.

"I'll leave Somi on your hands, Jen. She'll be assigned to your team."

Jennie tapped Somi on her shoulder. "So, where is he supposed to be?"

"I'm gonna bring him to Kai's team."

"Oh, graphics..." said Jennie, glancing on the entrance of the department.

"We'll go ahead now. Take care of Somi, okay?"

Jennie smiled, showing a thumbs up. She turned to the newest member of her team. "So.. where should I put you..." Her eyes wandered to the nearest bays. The only available terminal is beside her. "I guess you could take that seat."

"Thank you, Ms. Jennie." Somi gestured a bow and walked towards the table.

Jennie is thankful that Somi is a fast learner. Aside from the pretty girl image she has, her attitude is also satisfactory.

As the day goes by, Jennie has been noticing how Bambam keep on appearing around their area literally every hour, just to say hi and talk to Somi quick. These two interns always arrives at the office together, eat lunch together, and go home together. This gave Jennie an impression that something special going on with them.

It was a little past five in the afternoon when Jennie noticed that Bambam is roaming around their area again, obviously waiting for Somi. He couldn't come near because Jennie is still teaching Somi something. He just signaled Somi something, animatedly telling her that he'll be waiting in the lobby. Somi nodded.

"What a clingy boyfriend you have there, dear." said Jennie, admitting the sweetness of the two.

"You meant Bam, miss?" asked Somi, confused.

"Yeah, who else? He's your boyfriend, right?"

Somi immediately shook her head. "No, we're not together."

"What?"

"We're just friends, Ms. Jennie."

"Friends? How come you guys are always together?"

"Bam and I practically grew up together. He lives few blocks from our house. We were classmates since elementary. We even went to the same University. He's like a brother to me," Somi asserted.

Jennie blinked at that. "I just thought that you two are... Well, never mind."

"We get that a lot, Ms. Jennie. It's not new."

"It's because you two seemed inseparable."

"Bam is just so protective of me. He doesn't have a sister."

"Do you think he likes you?" asked Jennie, getting more interested this time.

"I don't know but he's in love with another girl right now, so us is really impossible, miss."

"Woooo. So you're crushing on him?"

"No, Miss Jennie," said Somi, shaking her head. "He's really just like a big brother to me. Besides, he's not really my type."

"What is your type then?"

"Boo!"

Before Somi could answer, Lisa suddenly popped out in front of Jennie's terminal, like she crawled silently to surprise them. The two girls were startled and couldn't move for few seconds.

"Hey, it's already five o'clock. Stop that and go home now," said Lisa, tapping her hands in a drum beat.

Jennie felt something rushing down her chest. It's been more than two weeks now since they've actually talked. And with talk, she meant being alone with Lisa. Although she feels the urge to stay close, she has been trying to act normal around Lisa lately to stop Rosé from getting suspicious again.

But the smell of Lisa's perfume made Jennie realized how she missed that scent. Jennie got used to smelling it because of the act they did. The perfume itself does not captivate her. What she loves about it is the way it smells when it's mixed with Lisa's body fragrance. That's one of the reasons she enjoyed snuggling with Lisa, the scent is too irresistible for her.

"We're just wrapping up. You're going home now?" asked Jennie.

"Yeah."

"Then why are you still here?" asked Jennie, regretting it the last minute. She should've use the 'nice card' for now because she's missing Lisa.

Lisa scratched her nape. "Uh, well... I just... I just happen to pass by the area and noticed that you two are still here. You don't want to force the interns to render overtime, do you?"

Jennie rolled her eyes quick, thinking that Lisa doesn't feel the same way. "We're about to go home in a while."

"By the way, I haven't formally introduced myself yet. Hi, I'm Lisa." Lisa stretched her arm out to Somi.

Somi hesitated to give her hand but eventually gave in. "I... I'm Somi..."

"Ahh, so you're the Somi, Bam's Somi?" said Lisa, looking surprised.

Somi shook her head right away. "No. We're not really together. Bam is like a brother to me."

"Huh? Really?" Lisa scratched her head. "Well, Bam keeps on talking about you, you know. I thought you're his girlfriend."

"I don't have a boyfriend right now." Somi shyly admitted.

Lisa flashed out her lopsided smile, leaning closer to Somi. "Are you looking for one?"

Jennie was observing how Somi would react to Lisa's killer smile. She's not sure but she thinks Somi blushed a little.

"What about Bam then? Don't you like him?" Lisa followed up, pulling her body back.

"Oh, Lisa, stop that. She's about to go home with Bam now so stop interrogating her, okay?" said Jennie.

Lisa pretends to froze, saying, "Yes, Boss." Then she covered her mouth when she realized what she said. Good thing Rosé wasn't around anymore.

Jennie chuckled after seeing Lisa's reaction, which looked so cute by the way.

Lisa fixed her bag on her shoulder. "I better go now, girls. I still have tennis practice. I'll see you tomorrow, Jen."

"Take care, Lisa," said Jennie, feeling a little bit disappointed because Lisa didn't ask her out.

"You too."

Jennie felt her heartbeat rose when Lisa patted her head before leaving the area. She missed being treated like that, like a princess. The two girls followed Lisa with their eyes until she's gone from their sight.

"So, where are we again?" Jennie tried to compose herself so it won't be too obvious that she's been totally distracted. "Ah, yeah, we were talking about guys. What's your type of guy then?"

Somi was spacing out and was not in herself yet. Jennie had to nudge her slightly before she was able to say anything.

"Lisa..." Somi mumbled under her breath.

"Huh?" Jennie heard it but she's not sure what it meant.

"Lisa.." said Somi her eyes staring at nothing. "Shes totally my type."

Fast

Double update!!! ♥♥♥♥

So, she likes Lisa. Ugh. Isn't it too fast? She just met Lisa today, just this afternoon. She couldn't be in love, right?

Jennie is currently lying on her bed, staring at the ceiling, fiddling her hands on her tummy. What Somi told her earlier made her feel anxious.

It's your entire fault, Lisa! She screamed in her head while punching through the air. You've just turned Somi to be your newest fan girl because you're so flirty! Ugh! Stupid Lisa! Stupid!

Jennie turned aside to check on her phone. *Why isn't she texting me? Is she busy? Doesn't she miss talking to me?*

She groped for a pillow and hid her head under it.

Uhh. I'm going crazy.

The next day, Jennie found Somi already in the office when she got in. She can't deny that this intern is a good one. Her chances of passing is really high.

"Hi there," said Jennie, turning on her PC.

"Morning, Ms. Jennie."

"Wow, you look amazing today. Partying later?" asked Jennie, noticing make-up on the intern's face that she has not been doing in the past few days.

"Not really." Somi smiled, tucking her hair behind her ear. "I just want to feel pretty today."

"You are always pretty, dear. Don't worry."

"Thanks..."

Jennie grabbed a wet tissue and poured a rubbing alcohol on it.

"Uh, Ms. Jen, can I ask you something?"

"Yeah, sure." Jennie started cleaning her table with wet tissue.

"By any chance, are you close friends with Lisa?"

Jennie's hand stopped. "W-we're friends, why?"

"I just want to know if she has a girlfriend..."

"The last time I checked, she's single," said Jennie. She resumed cleaning her table. "But I'm not sure anymore. In case you're not aware, many women are just throwing themselves at her."

"Oh, is that so.." Somi looked disappointed.

"You really like her?" Jennie asked to re-assure, hoping that the answer would change.

Somi nodded shyly. "How about you, don't you think she's cute?"

"Uh, well, she is charming, yes."

"So, you like her too?"

"Uhm.."

"Ms. Jennie..."

"Yes?"

"You're blushing. Hihhi."

"Am I?" Jennie's initial instinct told her to look around to see if Rosé is already there. "You're a crazy kid. I just easily blush when asked about things like that."

"So, do you like Lisa?"

"All the girls here in the office like her, Somi. What you're feeling now is really normal." said Jennie, dumping the used tissue in the trash bin below her table.

"All the girls? Including you?"

"Do you want me to fail you in your training?"

Somi chuckled, raised her hands to surrender. "I'm just asking you, Ms. Jen."

"Why do you want to know that anyway?"

"It's because I like her a lot, and I'm planning to confess soon."

Jennie's eyes almost popped out of their sockets. "What? Confess right away? You just met her yesterday, right? And does your confession have anything to do with me?"

"Well.. it's because of yesterday," said Somi, a bit hesitant. "..there's just something different with the way you two talk to each other..."

Jennie held the mouse this time, pretending to start working. She can hear the fast beat of her heart. "Different in what way?"

"It's hard to explain. But you two are emitting the girlfriends vibe, Miss. That's why I've thought of asking you first about her before I make my confession," said Somi.

Jennie is wondering what exactly these people --- Rosé and Somi --- are seeing that made them think something is going on between her and Lisa.

As far as she remembers, Lisa and she had a quick-small-talk yesterday. Nothing really unusual. But then, how come Somi was able to sense something from that?

Not knowing the answer herself, Jennie faked a smile instead. "Don't worry, Lisa and I are just friends."

Somi's face lit up. "So, you won't mind if I hang out with her?"

Jennie shook her head. "You shouldn't worry about me, instead you should think about the other fan girls here in the office. In case you're not aware yet, they are killing each other to get Lisa's attention."

"That doesn't bother me, Ms. Jennie. I'm gonna start my move today." said Somi, clapping her hands.

Jennie rolled her eyes discreetly. *My gosh. This kid is something.*

Office hours are finally over. Jennie is currently waiting by the elevator area when she saw Bam walking alone. He smiled at her.

"You're going home now?" asked Jennie, smiling back.

"Yeah." Bam answered shortly, it was followed by a deep sigh.

"Where's Somi?"

"She left a few minutes ago."

Jennie felt something is odd. Somi and Bambam always go home together. "Why isn't she with you? Did you guys fight?"

"Nope. But someone's driving her home today."

"Who?"

Bambam let out another loud sigh before looking at Jennie. "It's Lisa."

Jennie's eyes widened. *Uuuggghhh! That stupid-flirty Lisa!!!*

Coffee shop

"Somi wanted me to pretend that I have something else to do and that she has no one to drive her home. Unfortunately, Somi's house is just on Lisa's way home," said Bam.

"And you played along?" asked Jennie. She invited Bam for a cup of coffee to talk about it. She can't help it. She wants to find out more about what happened.

"Yeah, what else I can do? Somi likes her."

"Why do you seem to be not okay with it? I thought you were like brotherly-sisterly close?"

Bam smiled weakly. "To Somi it's like that, but for me, it isn't."

"Wow." Jennie brought her hands to her mouth. "You're in love with her?"

Bam nodded slowly. "For more than a year now."

"Then why don't you confess?"

"It's not that easy," said Bam before sipping on his coffee. "We grew up really close like relatives. It was just recently when I realized that I'm inlove with her."

"How are you feeling now knowing that she likes Lisa?"

"Anxious. Jealous. I don't know," said Bam, forcing a smile. "The thing is I can't blame Lisa either. She's just being kind because she thought Somi was not feeling well today."

"I don't think Somi would do anything stupid right now, you should not worry."

I'm gonna kill that stupid-flirty Lisa tomorrow!

"What if she confessed?"

"Do you really think she'd do that?"

"Maybe. Somi is still naive and has a tendency of falling in love fast."

"I don't think Lisa will take advantage of her, so you better stop worrying."
said Jennie.

Yeah, she really better not.

Bam let out a loud exhale before grabbing his cup to take another sip. After putting down his cup he leaned closer on the table.

"We're in the same boat here, aren't we?" He asked.

Jennie was caught unguarded. She didn't know that it would feel different hearing it from a guy. "How can you say so?"

"Well, we wouldn't have this coffee talk if you weren't worried about them too, right?" asked Bam, smirking. "And you finished your coffee right after it was served. Were you that tensed?"

Jennie is speechless. Bam isn't asking her anymore if she likes Lisa or not --
- his already assuming.

"I get it. Don't worry, I won't tell anyone if you're uncomfortable to talk about it," said Bam, sounding sincere.

Jennie pressed her lips together, unsure of what to say anymore.

It's been two weeks now and I have a feeling that she's avoiding me. Is it just me or is she really doing it on purpose?

Lisa's thoughts are drifting back to Jennie. She's currently inside her car, waiting for Somi who's buying ice cream outside.

Ever since Rosé started teasing them about their closeness, Lisa felt that Jennie has been trying to somewhat avoid her. It's not something noticable or obvious. But for someone like who experienced how to be "close" to Jennie in a certain way, Lisa knew something's off with them. She understands though, maybe Jennie doesn't like the idea of Rosé pairing them up.

Because of that, Lisa is trying her best to hold herself back from texting or even calling Jennie --- which is now resulting to terribly missing the little lady.

"Hey, want some?"

Lisa saw Somi's hand with a spoonful of ice cream ready to feed her. She didn't even realize that Somi had already gotten inside the car.

Lisa was looking at the spoon in front of her face. She's not in the mood for ice cream right now but she's worried that it might drip on her car and will leave stain. She opened her mouth and ate it.

Somi giggled. "You're so cute..."

"I thought you're not feeling well? You shouldn't eat something like that if you're having a flu," said Lisa.

"Are you worried about me?"

"Uh, yeah... I don't want to be the reason for you being absent."

Somi giggled like a teenager again.

Lisa is now starting to wonder what's wrong with Somi. "Maybe I should drive you home now."

"That fast? Why don't we have dinner together first?"

"Huh? The reason I'm driving you home today is because Bam won't be able to send you home, right?"

"I was not feeling well this morning but I guess you have the magic in you that can cure me," said Somi.

Lisa stared at Somi awkwardly. *What the hell is she saying?*

"Lisa, do you think I'm pretty?"

"Y-yeah, I bet lots of boys are courting you, right?"

"Yes, but they don't have the power over me."

Lisa was unsure how to respond again.

"But you, you have the power to make my heart beat fast all the time."
Somi grabbed Lisa's hand and placed it on her chest. "Can you feel that? It's beating fast now, right?"

"Y-yeah..." as Lisa was about to pull her hand away, Somi held it tight, forced it to open wide and brushed it on her left breast.

"Hey ----" Lisa immediately felt awkward when she felt the soft sensation on her palm. She forcedly pulled her arm away. "What's wrong with you?"

"Nothing is wrong, Lisa. What I'm feeling for you is right."

"I should drive you home now."

Just as before Lisa starts the engine, she saw Somi put the ice cream cup on the dashboard. Her initial instinct is to check if there is anything that dripped on the carpet or the chair.

"No, we're not going to my place yet.." Somi's voice was seductive this time.

"What are you... wha ----"

Somi moved over and sat on Lisa's lap, her legs spread around the latter's waist. Lisa was surprised because she didn't saw Somi move. The last thing she remembered seeing was the cup on her dashboard, and with just a blink she's facing the girl's boobies now. She didn't know how Somi managed to do that in just two seconds.

What the hell! Is she a ninja?

Somi groped for Lisa's hands and put it around her waist.

"The only place we're going to now is your place," said Somi, leaning forward to give Lisa a kiss.

What the hell!

Help!

HELP!

SOMEBODY HELP ME!!!

Nuisance

"The only place we're going to now is your place," said Somi, leaning forward to give a kiss.

Lisa flattened her palms against Somi's shoulders and shoved her away. "Hey! Could you please stop this?"

"I'll only stop if you bring me to your place now."

"No, no, no! This is not right!"

The intern didn't seem to get it. "What's right for you then? This?" Somi started unbuttoning her shirt.

Oh shit!

Lisa realized that it was serious when she saw a small pink brassiere already being exposed.

"Hey, stop doing that!" said Lisa, buttoning back the shirt while Somi was still unbuttoning the others.

What should I do with this girl! Damnit!

♪ Feels like I'm walking on tightrope, my heart is in my throat, I'm counting on high hopes to get me over you ♪

Both turned their attention to the ringing phone on the dashboard. It was Lisa's.

"Excuse me, I need to take that call." said Lisa, slightly panting.

Somi sighed loudly but eventually gave in. She sat back on the passenger seat and buttoned her shirt back. Lisa went out of the car to answer the phone.

"Hello?"

"Lisa? Are you alright?" It was Krystal calling.

"I think so. I'm glad you called." Lisa wiped her sweat with her handkerchief.

"Why do you sound exhausted? Were you running or something?"

Lisa glanced at her car before saying, "I was in wrestling with someone..."

"What?"

Lisa facepalmed herself when she realized what she said. "One of the new interns in the office was assaulting me in my car a while ago. I don't know how to tame her."

"Assaulting?" Krystal laughed. *"You should try to stop being charming for once, Lisa. It's just your fault."*

"It's not funny, Krys," Lisa hissed. "She was about to kiss me before you called."

"What? So I was right, you were really in trouble."

"Huh?"

"I was having a weird feeling just now that I need to call you and I don't know why. It turns out that you really need someone to save your butt then."

Lisa chuckled. "Yeah. Thanks Krys, I'll make it up to you next time."

"Kids nowadays are so aggressive, eh?"

"Tell me about it." Lisa rolled her eyes. "Tsk. What should I do with her?"

"Tell her you already have a girlfriend. She'll stop if you do that."

"But I don't want to break her heart, Krys."

"What if she keeps on assaulting you? Don't tell me you'd give in?"

"No. Of course not. I'm still in love with Jennie, okay?" said Lisa. "I don't have the slightest interest in this kid inside my car."

"Then tell her that you're with Jennie."

"I can't. Jennie is the one supervising her. I'll be dead if she finds that out."

"Then tell Jennie about it."

Lisa thought of it as a good idea. She'd do anything to stop this kid from harassing her. "Do you think she would agree to that?"

"If she likes you she will surely agree to it."

"But she has been avoiding me lately. In fact, she has been avoiding me after the trip," Lisa confessed.

"Avoiding you in what way?"

"Well, we rarely talk," said Lisa, scratching her head. "She doesn't chat me anymore. Thinking about it, I believe it started when Rosé noticed our closeness."

"Really? That's interesting."

"What do you think?"

"There could only be two possible reasons why she's doing that, Lisa."

"The only reason I could think of is everything that she'd shown me was just part of the play," said Lisa, dejected. "Since the trip is over, the acting is over too."

"That's the first reason I have in mind."

"What's the second one?"

"It's the other side of the rainbow."

"And that is?"

"You told me she's been avoiding you after the trip, right? Maybe she's doing that because she's totally fallen for you and just can't accept it yet?"

Before Lisa's mind could process what Krystal told her, she heard a knock on the door glass from inside her car. Somi eventually rolled the window down.

"Lisa, what's taking you so long? I'm bored."

Ugh. This kid is really annoying.

Lisa went back to Krystal. "Hey, I need to go. I'll talk to you later."

"Yeah, I heard that."

"Yah! Why are you giggling?"

"Make sure not to get raped, okay?"

"Ugh, Krystal!"

They ended the call and Lisa walked back into her car.

"So, where to?" asked Somi, looking excited.

"I'm driving you home. I got urgent stuff to attend to later," said Lisa, turning on her car engine.

"Aww, that's too bad. I thought I could spend some more time with you."

Lisa smiled apologetically. "Sorry..."

"I'll let you pass this time on one condition." Somi raised a finger.

"What?"

"Pick me up for work tomorrow morning."

Lisa frowned and looked away. *Tsss. What a persistent brat.*

"Just this one last time, please? Please?" Somi pleaded, tugging Lisa's arm.

"Fine, just one last time, okay?"

"Okay! Yeeeeee!!!" Somi wrapped her arm around Lisa's neck.

Your girlfriend is crazy, Bam!

Jennie was restless the whole night to the point that she didn't enjoy the final episode of the drama she'd been watching.

I wonder how their date went. Did Somi confess? I know Lisa isn't the type of person who'll take advantage of a situation like that. But what if she likes Somi too? Aish!

She keeps looking at her phone from time to time but was disappointed to see nothing. After thinking about it, she sent a message to Lisa.

To: Lisa

Message: Make sure Somi will come tomorrow for work, okay?

The first few minutes were like hell while she was waiting for a reply. She got excited when her phone beeped but she was disappointed with the response she got.

From: Lisa

Message: I will.

Jennie threw her phone on the bed.

That's just it? Did Somi confess already? Are they together?

She messed her hair up in frustration. *Aaaaarrrrrrggggghh!*

Something's weird here.

Jennie was staring at the empty table beside her. She's already used to see Somi coming to the office earlier than she does but today is different. Usually, she'll see Somi's bag already sitting on the chair if the kid decided to go somewhere first, but today is empty.

She felt hopeful when she heard footstep in the hallway. She never thought she'd be happy to see Bam coming early, which could only mean that Somi is just a few steps behind him. Bam walked straight to graphics department without looking around the area. Jennie was motionless from where she's standing, waiting for Somi to appear from the door.

Three...

Two...

One...

No one? Is she not with Bam?

Jennie sat in her chair feeling totally disappointed. It doesn't really matter is Somi is late or what, what worries her is the thought that the kid is still with Lisa at the moment.

After checking herself in the mirror, she decided to get her morning coffee in the pantry. Jennie was passing by the elevator area when the elevator bell dinged. The lift door opened on their floor, revealing Somi who stepped out and went inside the office without noticing Jennie.

But just as before everything feels right, to her disappointment, a certain person went out of the lift after Somi.

L-lisa...?

Jennie was frozen from her spot, thinking that the only reason these two came in together is because Lisa picked up the intern from her house. Not to mention that Somi's ear to ear grin is giving all the answers to Jennie's enigma.

She met eyes with Lisa for a fraction of a second. Jennie turned away immediately and went straight to the pantry. She's not really in the mood to even say hi. She's not sure if she's mad. It was just the start of the morning but she felt like her day has already been ruined.

Were they together? Why are they together?

Jennie stared blankly at the coffee machine. She can't take the image off her mind: how Lisa went out of the lift, how Somi's victory smile looked like, and that single eye contact she had with Lisa. Jennie wanted to give Lisa an idea that she's not pleased with what she saw, that's why she went to the pantry without saying a word.

"Morning!" said Somi, humming happily.

"Oh, hey," Jennie replied shortly. She settled her coffee down.

"Are you alright, Ms. Jennie?"

"Mmm? Yeah, why?"

"Hmmm, something's just different in your aura. You seem to be emitting negative vibes today."

Jennie knew herself that something's off in her mood too. "Don't mind me. I just woke up in the wrong side of the bed."

"You sure?" asked Somi.

"Yeah." Jennie faked a smile. She turned back to her computer. "What about you, you seem to be happy...."

Great! Why am I even asking that....

Somi giggled. "It's because Lisa is so sweet. She drove me home yesterday and picked me up for work this morning."

"Ah, yeah? Were you able to confess?" said Jennie, annoyed.

She picked me up countless of times already, don't be too proud yet.

"Yesterday."

"So.. what happened?"

"She.. she confessed something to me too..." said Somi, pouting a little.

"After she dropped me home last night she told me that she's already in love with someone else."

That caught Jennie's attention. "D-did she.. did she tell you who is it?"

Somi shook her head. "She told me it's someone I don't know."

Jennie curved her eyebrows. *Someone Somi doesn't know?*

"But I have a feeling that it's the girl named Krystal."

"H-how did you know her?" asked Jennie.

"I saw her name flashing on Lisa's phone," said Somi, looking jealous.

"Lisa had to step out of the car to talk to her. I wonder what they were talking about that she doesn't want me to hear."

Jennie stared blankly at her monitor.

I remember her doing the same thing when we were in Gampo. What's with you, Krystal?

Jennie was filling her tumbler with water when she felt someone stood behind, waiting for her to finish. Upon recognizing perfume of the person, Jennie smiled. It's the familiar scent she'd been missing all the time.

Jennie turned around and involuntarily took a step backward when she realized that they were so near each other. "Oh..."

"Hey." Lisa smiled at her. "Why you looked surprised to see me? I'm also an employee here, you know..."

"I know, I'm sorry... It's just that --- oh, go ahead..." Jennie realized her stupidity and stepped aside to give way to Lisa.

"Thanks," said Lisa, bending a little to fill her tumbler with water.

Instead of walking away from that place, Jennie can't help but admire the exquisiteness of the person in front of her. Lisa is wearing a flannel, sleeves rolled up, showing her silky forearms. Her gray pants fit perfectly on her legs. Her hair is a bit messy but looks hot on her.

Jennie may not have admitted it to herself before, but the truth is she finds Lisa unbelievably attractive, chiseled perfectly to tease hearts.

"How's your day?" asked Lisa, not looking at her.

It was then when Jennie realized what she's doing. *Oh, gosh. Did I just check her out?* "Busy as usual. How about yours?"

"It's quite stressful for a Friday," Lisa replied, giving a quick look, showing crooked smile. "Can't wait for the day to end."

And that smile just did the trick.

Jennie felt her heart starting to act weird, beating twice or maybe even thrice it's normal rate. For the nth time in her history, just because of Lisa, she was once again lost for words.

Oh my gosh, this is not good!

Jennie felt the need to be out of that scene right away. She doesn't want Lisa to notice her internal turmoil. In fact, she's a bit concerned about her heart's behavior that she already considered going to the infirmary to have it checked.

"So, uh, I'll go ahead."

Just as when Jennie regret saying it, but left with no choice but to leave, Lisa grabbed her by her arm. "Wait. Can we.. talk?"

Jennie felt her body heating up with Lisa's touch. She missed it. She missed the warmth and comfort that palm had given her. She'd be lying if she'd say she doesn't want to stay. All her body parts are telling her to stay, except maybe for her heart who knows nothing but to pump faster.

"Uh, so... what are we going to talk about?" asked Jennie instead, trying to sound natural.

"Are you alright?" asked Lisa, raising her tumbler to drink from it.

Jennie opened her mouth to say something but got distracted by Lisa's reddened wet lips from the drink. She was brought to more agony when Lisa pressed her lips together after putting down the tumbler at the counter.

Oh, jennie, get a grip on yourself!

"Jennie?" Lisa tapped her. "Are you alright? You're zoning out."

"Y-yeah, I'm... I'm okay..." Jennie looked away, pinching her nose with her fingers.

"Okay." Lisa exhaled. She placed her hands inside her back pockets and said, "Uhm, like I said, can we talk?"

Jennie put a hand on her side neck, unsure of what it meant. "Mm, aren't we talking now?"

"Uhm," Lisa scratched the top of her head. "I mean can we.. talk alone?"

"Alone?" Jennie looked around the pantry and saw no one around but them.

Lisa scrunched up her face and facepalmed herself. "Uh, well, you know, it's Friday and uh... I was thinking if... I mean.. can we talk alone in some other place.. later?"

"Ahhh, later?" A smile slipped across Jennie's face, all because of Lisa's cute nervousness. "You mean after work?"

"Y-yeah..." Lisa rubbed her palms together slowly. "Uhm, only if you're free." She bit her lower lip on the last word.

Jennie observed the somewhat embarrassed Lisa in front of her, amused by the obvious coyness. "Don't worry, I'm free." There's no point playing hard to get now, Jennie surely missed being with this person alone.

Lisa's face lit up. "So, how should we do this? Should we go down together or I'll pick you up in front?"

"Let's just meet in the parking lot like before. I'm still trying to avoid your fan girls, you know."

Lisa had a slightly sheepish look on her face as her hand reached for her nape. Then she brought her clenched fist in front of Jennie for a fist bump. "Okay, just like before."

Jennie smacked her closed fist to Lisa's. "I'll see you later then."

"Okay, I'll go ahead." Lisa walked out first of the pantry.

After the door was shut, Jennie was left alone in the pantry. She was trying her best to hold off her smile, looking around to make sure no one is looking at her at the moment.

Did she just ask me out?

She covered her face with a hand while trying to stop herself from squealing.

Eeeeeeeee!

All her anxieties from the past few days vanished after that little talk with Lisa. It just made her feel that they are mutually missing each other. Jennie scratched off the "Somi" event this morning from her head.

When the clock struck five, Jennie went to the restroom to retouch her makeup. It's not necessary to hurry up because Lisa will surely wait for her like before. She's not in the mood for any interrogation yet so she doesn't want Rosé or the other fan girls to notice them together.

After the quick retouching, Jennie went back to her station and saw Somi fixing her own stuff hastily.

"Hey, you in a hurry?" asked Jennie.

"Yes, Ms. Jennie..." Somi was too busy putting things in her bag.

"Dating?" Jennie's feeling confident to ask something like that now because she knows that whoever Somi is gonna be with this afternoon, it's not going to be Lisa.

"Not really. But I have to catch up with Lisa."

"W-what did you say?"

"I asked Lisa to go out earlier, but she said she can't because she's seeing someone today," said Somi, busy arranging her stuff. "I have a feeling that it's her girlfriend so I need to go with her. I want to see that girl."

Jennie's mouth fell agape, impressed with the kid's boldness.

"I'll go ahead, Ms. Jennie... Enjoy your weekend." Somi grabbed her bag and strode out of the area.

Jennie was still dumbfounded, trying to process what Somi is doing. When she realized that Somi is gonna ruin her plan, she quickly fixed her things too and pulled out her phone to warn Lisa.

Please pick up! Please pick it up!

Brrr... Brrr... Brrr...

"Hey."

"Lisa, where are you now?" Jennie walked quickly, heading to the elevator area.

"Uhm, I'm waiting for the elevator down."

"What? You're supposed to be on your car by now."

"I know, but something came up."

"You need to hide from S---" Jennie reached the elevator area and was frozen with what she saw.

Aside from the other fellow employees who are also waiting, three people caught Jennie's eyes: Lisa, Bam, and Somi.

Somi's hands were firmly placed on Lisa's arm, making sure the latter won't escape. Lisa's other hand was holding her phone. And Bam, who looked disappointed again, was just standing few steps away from the two with both hands in his side pockets.

The elevator door opened. All the other employees in the area went in except for those four.

Jennie slowly took her phone away from her ear. She knew the meaning of Lisa's disappointed face.

"Ms. Jennie..."

Jennie turned her eyes to Somi who called her.

Somi glanced at Lisa first, specifically looking at the phone in Lisa's hand. She looked at Jennie after and asked, "Were you the one who just called Lisa?"

Sorry for not updating last night. I want to double update today, but I think I can't. I'm still having a hangover. Sorry guys, but I will update tomorrow if I'm good. Double update perhaps?

Btw, THANK YOU. ❤️🙏

Missed

"Were you the one who just called Lisa?"

Although the question was intended for Jennie to answer, Lisa knew that she needs to say something too. Somi had the notion that the one calling her earlier was her girlfriend.

Lisa shifted her eyes to Jennie who's as speechless as her. She doesn't know if she hallucinating or not, but Jennie's eyes were focused on her and Somi's linked arms.

"Yes," said Jennie, before Lisa could even speak up.

Lisa felt Somi's grip on her arm tightened. The three of them, including Bam, are now staring at Jennie. It might not be that obvious but Lisa was the most surprised of them all. Answering Somi's question like that could make the kid think that they are really an item.

"Yes, Somi, I was the one who called her." Jennie confirmed further.

Somi look confused. "So you're the one Lisa is supposed to go out with today?"

Lisa swallowed something in her throat. Krystal said that if Jennie will pretend to be her girlfriend again, it only means that she likes her.

"Yes," came Jennie's response.

Somi looked back and forth to Lisa and Jennie, slowly removing her arm from Lisa.

"We're supposed to talk about our new project," said Jennie in her authoritative tone. "It's not like what you're thinking, Somi. It's a business meeting, not a date."

"Oh, I'm sorry," said Somi, bowing her head.

Lisa was a bit disappointed but felt relieved as well because they could get rid of the intern now.

"But if it's about a task can I still tag along so I could learn more, Ms. Jennie?" Somi who seemed to have found another way to include herself in, asked them.

Lisa brought a hand to her nape. *Damnit! This kid doesn't really know when to give up.*

Jennie walked towards them. "Sure. But on one condition... we should bring along Bam too."

"Me?" asked Bam, taking out both his hands from his pockets.

"Yes," Jennie answered, still in her bossy aura. "You're an intern too, right? You'll get something out of this so you should tag along."

"Oh, okay."

Lisa frowned and puff her cheeks.

Great. My date has been totally ruined.

Lisa is disappointed. She's been missing Jennie so much that she mustered all the courage to finally ask the girl out. It is also her way of gauging if something is wrong with the two of them, or if something has really changed.

Although she has no plans of confessing, Lisa was hoping that the night would end like how their nights ended in Gampo: full of laughter, teasing, and just pure sweetness. However, all of those expectations are far from what's currently happening. Instead of waiting alone in her car for Jennie, they are now walking together in the parking area along with two chaperones.

She felt heartsick when she saw Somi walking ahead of them, obviously aiming for the front seat.

Lisa was punching her own thigh due to frustration.

Oh, please, what could be worse? Having two chaperones with us while my supposed-to-be-date will be sitting at the back? Damn, I so hate this day!

Just as she thought, when she unlocked the car with her remote, Somi grabbed the knob to the front seat.

"Back seat," said Jennie, approaching the car. "You better sit beside Bam."

Lisa tried to repress a smile while gawking at the two ladies. Somi didn't object and went to the backseat immediately.

Sometimes her bossy aura has its perks, hmm.

"So, where to?" asked Jennie after she shut the door on her side.

"Uhm, craving for anything at the moment?" asked Lisa.

"Not really. Can we just eat somewhere near so we could go home right after?" said Jennie, busy buckling her seatbelt.

"Oh, yeah, sure." Lisa pushed down the handbrake after starting the engine.

Great, this is just great. Ugh!

They had their meal in a Japanese restaurant. Like what Jennie said, the meal was full of discussion and brainstorming about the next campaign they will be working on. Lisa didn't enjoy much of it because she felt like they are still working instead of enjoying the Friday night. She was totally not in the best mood towards the end of their meal. She knew that after this dinner they are all going home. All her efforts ended in futile.

"Lisa, are you alright?"

Lisa blinked, barely heard what Somi asked her.

"Yeah, are you okay? You seem to be quiet," asked Jennie, placing a hand on Lisa's leg.

Lisa's attention shifted to what Jennie did. She looked at Bam and Somi, who were sitting in front, to check if there is a way they could see what's happening under the table.

Isn't it funny how a simple gesture like that from Jennie could wake up all the nerves in her body? Lisa secretly hoped that Jennie won't move it away soon.

"I was just thinking of what to do after we go home," said Lisa sadly.

Jennie rubbed her thumb against Lisa's thigh this time. "Why? You don't want to go home yet?"

Lisa's heart flutters with what Jennie is doing. "I guess I just want more out of this night. I'm gonna be all alone in my apartment if we go home now."

Jennie turned to the new interns, still not removing her hand. "I think we could go somewhere else after we drive home these two first."

Lisa saw a gleam of hope with what Jennie said. Could it be that they were thinking the same thing?

But just as before Lisa got too excited Somi spoke up, "We could still give you company. The more the merrier, right? Besides, it's Friday, let's go hang out somewhere else."

Not wanting to drag the chaperones with them, Lisa protested. "Nah, you kids should go home now."

"Kids?" Somi cocked her head aside. "For your information, I'm turning twenty-two in two months. And you're like what, a year or two older than me? Bam here is twenty-three. We're graduating college after this internship. I don't see any reason why you two should consider us as minors."

Lisa and Jennie looked at each other, sighing. Jennie rubbed her palm on Lisa's leg signaling that she'll handle this. "Where do you guys want to go then?"

"Karaoke!" Somi enthusiastically answered, raising her clenched fist in the air.

"She's a frustrated singer, guys. You'd have to bare with her," Bam warned, earning himself a playful punch from Somi.

"What do you think?" asked Jennie, turning to Lisa.

Lisa let out another loud sigh and stared at the two "kids". Bam had a whatever-you-want-to-decide look while Somi had those pleading eyes.

Lisa finally gave up and raised her hand to assent. "Fine. I guess it's better than going home early."

They got a private room in a KTV restaurant and had a few shots. To their surprise, the interns were hard drinkers. Bam was a bit cautious though with his intake because he wants to look after Somi. The latter doesn't care how much she had already, ending up standing in front of the TV singing the entire period.

Lisa feels relaxed this time, feeling much better of Jennie's sudden mood change. From the bossy aura she had when they were in the restaurant, she's now turned into a sweet Jennie.

Lisa somehow felt that Jennie is warding her from Somi. Jennie immediately sat beside her when they got into the room, even before Somi had done her move. Jennie also shared food with her just like how they did in Gampo. Although they were less sweet this time, it just gives her the feeling of going back to that memorable trip.

After few shots they had, which Jennie had forbidden Lisa to have anyway, Somi and Bam started singing nonstop.

"Do you want to sing?" Lisa asked Jennie while they were slouching lazily on the couch, watching the interns singing duet in front of the TV.

Jennie shook her head while reaching for the crackers. "Not in the mood to. You?"

"Nah, let them have the stage for themselves."

Somi and Bam were like kids playing in front, pinching each other while singing. They were laughing like crazy drunken teenagers. Somi turned to them quickly, signaling them to join. They both declined by shaking their heads.

"That girl is totally in to you," said Jennie, munching the crackers on her hand.

"That's not something I'm proud of..." Lisa sighed.

Jennie chuckled. "Not your type?"

"Hell no. Especially after what happened yesterday."

"Why? What happened yesterday?"

"Oh, well, uhm.. let's just say that she..."

"She...?"

Lisa let out another sigh before admitting it. "She tried to kiss me in my car..."

"What? Seriously?" Jennie quickly glanced at Somi, imagining how a girl with such demuré image could be so aggressive. "Then what did you do?"

"I politely pushed her away." Lisa gestured 'pushing' with her hands. "Good thing Krystal called so I was able to make good excuse to drive her home early. Krystal kind of saved my day."

"I was planning to call you too, you know."

"You knew I was with Somi yesterday?"

"Mmm-mmm. It was weird to see Bam going home alone so I asked him. Then I drag --- I mean.. we went to a coffee shop to talk. That's when he told me about his real feelings for Somi," said Jennie.

Lisa knew all about Bam's unrequited love for Somi since the first day the intern started. "Must have been hard for him yesterday."

"Yeah, he was in bad mood."

Lisa cleared her throat and adjusted her position on the couch. "You were planning to call me yesterday because you found out that I was with Somi?"

Jennie nodded quickly. "I wanted to make sure you won't take advantage of Somi."

"Huh? Take advantage of her? Oh, come on, Jen, you know me better than that."

"Oh, do I? If I remember it right, you were flirting with the tattooed girl in Gampo even though you're pretending to be with me, right?"

"Hey, princess, if I recall it correctly, the girl was indeed flirting with me but I did NOT flirt back. It was one-sided. You were just overreacting because you're jealous," said Lisa, smirking.

"Jealous your face! That was just part of the acting, remember? I had to play the role. I had to be in character." Jennie scoffed.

"Whoo.. whatever.. ow!" Lisa was about to tease further when Jennie pinched her arm. "Still feisty, aren't we? Ouch!"

"Yah, stop that already..."

"Hey, what's with the smug face, princess?" Lisa poked Jennie's cheek this time. "You know, credits to the creator above, I have to admit that a pout face suit you really well."

Jennie glared at Lisa but the latter knew it was meant just to scare her. Eventually, Jennie gave in and smile sweetly. Lisa had totally felt at ease after seeing that smile, it's like nothing has really changed at all between them.

"Seriously tho, why do you want to call me yesterday?" asked Lisa, supporting her head with arm against the backrest.

"I don't know..."

"Come on, tell me... There must be a reason behind it.."

Jennie scrunched up her face. "You'll just laugh at me.."

Feeling the burning curiosity firing up more, Lisa made sure she'll sound sincere. "No, I won't, I promise."

Jennie turned to Lisa skeptically, raising an eyebrow.

"I promise I won't laugh." Lisa put a finger on her chest and made an 'X' sign.

To Lisa's surprise, Jennie bought the cross-my-heart thing. "I'm not sure how to say this but..." Jennie paused, turning her face away from Lisa's direction. "Maybe I just don't like the idea of you hanging out with her."

Lisa tried to repress her smile. "Uhm, are you implying that you don't like the idea of Somi hanging out with me because I'm not safe to be with?"

"That's not what I meant, stupid."

"Then what?"

"I mean.. shouldn't you be hanging out with your *boss* instead of her?"

"Ahhh," Lisa gasped, chuckling. Just as when she thought that this night isn't getting any better, she felt like screaming already because she's overjoyed with this confession.

"Hey, don't laugh at me. It's not like what you're thinking, okay?" said Jennie, turning her back to Lisa.

"I'm not laughing." Lisa couldn't help but let out a soft laugh, amused by Jennie's shyness.

"Yah! You just laughed, didn't you?" said Jennie, covering her face with her palms.

"I'm sorry, you're just too cute when you're jealous. Why are you facing there? Come on, look at me."

"Don't touch me." Jennie yanked Lisa's hand. "And I'm not jealous!"

"Oh, really? The boss ain't jealous, eh?" Lisa leaned closer to Jennie's ear and whispered, "Hey, I missed you..."

Jennie didn't say anything but Lisa felt her shoulders moved.

"Hey, come on, say something. Don't you believe me?" asked Lisa, squeezing Jennie's shoulders.

Jennie went back to slouching on the couch, arms folded across her chest. "You missed me?"

"Yeah.. it just feels like we haven't talked in ages," said Lisa, shifting her position to slouch beside Jennie, their arms touching. "I missed talking to you like this. How about you?"

Jennie's eyes were staring blankly at the two people in front of them, still singing like there's no tomorrow. Then she leaned her head against Lisa's arm. "I guess I missed you too."

Lisa pursed her lips to hold off her smile. "Uhm, so what did you miss about me?"

"This. I miss being close to you like this," said Jennie, tucking her arm under Lisa's.

Jennie's arm was held out beside Lisa's arm, their fingertips touching. After the obvious contact, Lisa thought that Jennie would move her hand away, but she didn't. Her hand just remained still like it's just waiting for Lisa to grab it.

After getting such signals, Lisa let her feelings take over her actions. She lightly brushed her thumb on Jennie's thumb hoping that the latter won't tug it away. To her surprise, Jennie returned the favor by rubbing her fingers against Lisa.

Both of them are now busy looking down at their hands playing with each other. After getting tired of the small game, Lisa decided to plunge her fingers into the gaps between Jennie's hand, which the latter didn't protest to, instead held her hand back tightly.

Lisa's breath hitched with the audible smile she made.

"Why are you smiling again?" Jennie looked up a bit, still leaning on Lisa's arm.

"It's just that all this time I thought you were avoiding me."

"And all this time I thought you don't miss me," Jennie buried her face back on Lisa's arm.

"Where did you get that? I even asked you out tonight, right?"

"I know. It's just that sometimes I'm afraid of the thought that you don't want me around you anymore," confessed Jennie, rubbing her free hand on Lisa's forearms.

"Hey, that's never gonna happen. You've helped me a lot, remember?" said Lisa. "We've been through something and I think a bond like that won't be easy to break." She looked up at the two interns in front. "I actually wanted to be alone with you tonight, just to catch things up. But I guess we're stuck with these chaperones."

Jennie smiled at that. "You don't want them around?"

"It's not like that. It's just that I don't get the chance to go out with you like this every day. The only chance I got was today but it just flew away like that," Lisa said with a sigh.

"You can just ask me out anytime."

"I'm afraid you'd say no."

"Why would I say no?"

"I don't know. I guess I still can't read what's in that mind of yours, princess." Lisa lightly poked Jennie's head.

"Well, you handled me pretty well in Gampo, right? I don't see any reason for the hesitation."

"Does that mean that you'd like to go out with me alone in some other day?"

"Tomorrow would be great."

Lisa smiled. "No chaperones?"

"Definitely, no chaperones, just the two of us, like in Gampo."

Lisa brought Jennie's hand between her two hands. "That sounds great."

Date

It was after she got home when everything sunk into her.

I'm going out with Lisa tomorrow, ALONE.

Jennie gritted her teeth. Having the idea of them being alone again makes her shiver. She's not sure why she's feeling that way. They went for a trip in Gampo for two days and two nights but she never felt that conscious.

Jennie brought a hand to her chest while staring endlessly at her room ceiling.

Sigh. I think I'm going crazy. We're just going out, come on, it's not like a romantic date, right? I'm just going out with a female friend, no need for formality or whatsoever. Right.. right.."

She stood up from the bed and walked towards her closet. It was after few minutes of rummaging when the idea finally hit her.

Wait, did I just plan on preparing what to wear for tomorrow? What the hell is happening to me? I don't do stuff like this before date, and hell, we're not even going out on a date for goodness sake. Uuuuuggggghhh!

Jennie ruffled her hair in frustration and sat back on the bed.

Okay, just stay cool, Jennie. You're just going out with a friend like you're just going out with Rosé for lunch. No need to be anxious about it. It's just Lisa, okay?

She put her fingernail between her teeth when she realized something.

But hell, it's Lisa we're talking about here. The Lisa that the girls in the office are swooning over. It's the same Lisa that made Irene overly jealous of me; and I'm going out with her tomorrow! Waaaaa!

Jennie plopped herself down on the bed. Somewhere in her musing, she had fallen asleep.

Beep...

Jennie's eyes flew open at the sound of her incoming message alert. That's when she realized that she fell asleep in an uncomfortable position, still wearing her clothes from yesterday.

What time is it?

She quickly sat up straight on the bed. She fished her phone under the pillows and was relieved to see that it's only past seven in the morning. She opened the text message and smiled.

From: Lisa

Message: Good morning! What time would the princess be ready for her service?

Jennie giggled after reading it. She typed in her reply quickly.

To: Lisa

Message: Morning Just pick me up around 11. Mom's gonna be out for the day so I still need to do some chores.

She just keeps on rereading the short conversation until the new message came in.

From: Lisa

Message: Aight! I'll see you later.

She quickly jumped out of the bed and headed downstairs.

We're going out, we're going out!

9:57 am

Jennie glanced over at the wall clock while drying her hair with a towel. Another towel is wrapped around her body. She rummaged through her clothes again just like last night. This isn't the first time she's going out with a friend but this is the first time that she can't really decide on what to wear.

Aish! Why do I feel like this is more of a date and not just a casual friendly hangout?

Jennie isn't a neophyte in the dating game. In fact, she had already gone out with several suitors --- some men which she found annoying, turning them down in the end. She doesn't know if the problem is on her part or the boys' but she easily gets turned off once she felt that a certain guy is befriending her with the sole intention of courting her.

But it's different with Lisa. Lisa could be sweet to her at some point but never made her feel that she was hitting on her romantically. After learning how Lisa's charm had shaken the majority of the female population in the office, Jennie secretly wished that her charms would work on Lisa too, not because she likes her but because she wonders who could capture Lisa's attention.

After an hour after checking her reflection seven times and changing her outfit every turn, Jennie finally settled with a simple white chanel blouse and a blue plaid skirt that's just a few inches above her knees.

Next problem: hair.

Put it in a bun or let it down?

Jennie was looking at the mirror holding her hair up with a hand, shifting angles to see which hairstyle would fit her attire. Then she heard her phone beep. Her eyes widened after reading the message.

From: Lisa

Message: Your service has arrived, your highness. I'll be just here anytime you're ready.

What! She's here!

Jennie strode across the room to her window and saw the red Suzuki Swift waiting for her.

"Oh my gosh!"

That's when she started to panic. There's no turning back now. Lisa is already there. They are really going out for real this time; no plays, no acting, just going out to have fun.

Do I look okay now? Will she like what I wear? Ugh! Why am I so nervous?

Jennie was walking back and forth her room, fanning herself with a hand, not sure on what to do anymore.

She decided to let her hair down. She quickly picked up her shoulder bag on the bed and ran down, not wanting Lisa to wait longer.

Jennie opened the passenger seat door just to be greeted by Lisa, "Hey..."

"Hey yourself..." Jennie responded while adjusted herself in.

There was an awkward moment of silence after she shut the door close. This is opposite of what Jennie had imagined. She can hear Lisa tapping fingers on the steering wheel while she was pretending to be busy looking something inside her bag.

"Umm, you.. uhm, y-you look great." Lisa remarked.

Jennie blushed instantly. Suddenly, the car AC isn't cold enough to cool down her burning face. "T-thank you.." Her eyes moved back to peek on Lisa. "You.. you look amazing yourself.."

Like what she always experiences, for the nth time in her existence, she was once again dazzled by Lisa's unfaltering appeal, gratified by the fact that she's going out with this hottie. The black polo shirt and a gray hoodie

Lisa's wearing matched perfectly with her somewhat messy hair. It's so simply yet so captivating.

"T-thanks..." said Lisa.

Then there was another awkward silence.

As far as Jennie is concerned, this is the first time she felt this helpless. She wants to start a conversation but doesn't know how to. She wants to be with Lisa and at the same time she wants to run away.

"Ugh..." Lisa leaned on the steering wheel, hiding her face in her arms.

That was enough to call Jennie from whatever planet her mind is into at the moment. "Something's wrong? Are you alright?" she asked.

Lisa waved a hand in response, still hiding her face. "Yeah, I'm fine. Don't worry about me."

"Is your head aching or something?" asked Jennie, slightly rubbing Lisa's back.

Lisa shook her head again, unwilling to show her face yet.

"Are you sure you still want to go out?"

Lisa finally turned her head aside to look at Jennie. "Of course, I do."

"Then what's the matter?"

Lisa exhaled first before burying her face back in her arms. "It's just that I'm freaking nervous right now. Ugh!"

With all the strange feelings Jennie is having since last night, she never imagined that Lisa will be in the same boat with hers.

"Nervous? Why?"

"I don't know. I know I shouldn't be, but I can't help it."

Jennie giggled. She ruffled the back of Lisa's short hair. "Hey, you wanna know a secret?"

Lisa raised her head a bit to peek. "Secret?"

"Mmm-mmm." Jennie nodded. "For the record, you're the only person who made me so conscious about how I'd look today."

The tip of Lisa's lips curved up into a small smile. "You're kidding me."

"I'm not."

"Seriously?"

"Yes, Lisa, yes. Don't you believe me?"

"I'd want to, but it's too good to be true.."

"Hah! You're giving me too much credit," said Jennie, shaking her head. "Would you like a proof that you're not dreaming?"

Lisa raised her head higher this time, looking curious.

"How about this?" Jennie leaned forward to pinch and wiggle Lisa's cheeks, tilting her head from one side to another. "Mmmmm! Who's the cute kid now, huh?" she said in a cute little voice like she's talking to a five-year-old.

Lisa chuckled. "I might not be a kid anymore but I won't argue with the cute, hahaha!"

"Conceited brat..." said Jennie, slapping Lisa gently.

Feeling a bit embarrassed, Lisa scratched the top of her head. "I was just kidding, okay?"

Seeing the slightly disarrayed hair, Jennie's uncontrollable hand move on its own to rearrange the mess. Lisa, although was surprised, stayed still, afraid that any move she'll make would ruin the moment.

"There." Jennie reclined on the backrest to admire her art.

"Do I look like someone who's qualified to take you out on a date now?" asked Lisa, putting her index and forefinger to her chin.

Jennie smirked in response, not because of the joke but because of the word 'date'. "I think so.."

Although Jennie may not have admitted it to herself last night, she is now convinced that they are going out now on a real date. There no use lying to herself because what she's feeling now is not what her friends are making her feel when they go out.

"So, where do you want to go?" Lisa's hand made its way to the gearshift.

"You haven't planned on what to do yet?" asked Jennie.

"I have plans but I just want to make sure I listen to what you have in mind first." Lisa picked up something from the dashboard and handed to Jennie two tickets. "What do you think?"

Jennie looked at the tickets closely. "Theme park?"

Lisa grimaced slightly, afraid that her date isn't a fan of what she had prepared. "Not your thing?"

"Definitely my thing. You think you can do this with me?" said Jennie, smirking.

"Of course, I can. Those are just rides, pfft. I'm more worried about you not enjoying it."

"Just rides', huh?" Jennie raised her hands to make quotation mark gestures with her fingers. "I was raised in a theme park, Lisa. You sure you can keep up with me?"

"Ha! I walk on the wild side. I laugh at the face of danger. HAHAHA!" said Lisa, imitating Simba's voice from The Lion King movie.

"We'll see then. Let's go."

Horror

"Shit." Lisa muttered after seeing signage in front of her. She just came back from a quick phone call with her dad without having any idea which rides Jennie had chosen first.

Jennie walked closer, linked her arms through Lisa's while sipping from her juice box. "What's the matter?"

"Uhh, nothing..." Lisa looked away.

Jennie sensed that there is something wrong. She looked up the signage to check on what Lisa saw.

Horror House --- Where Your Worst Nightmares Come True Jennie almost spat her drink out with what she realized. It was followed by a soft mocking laugh.

"What?" asked Lisa.

"Oh, I guess we have a scaredy cat here, huh?"

"I'm not scared." Lisa sneered.

"Just what?" Jennie bit her straw, still having that mocking smile on her face.

Lisa's eyes examined the hem of her jacket and played it with her hands. "I'm just.. just afraid of the dark."

Jennie burst out laughing this time. "So, the office heartthrob is a Nyctophobia?"

"Hey, don't laugh at me." Lisa pouted. "I have a serious fear of darkness."

"Do I remember someone telling me earlier that she walks on the wild side and laughs at the face of danger?"

"I was thinking of the rides that time, not this one..." Lisa grunted. "I never thought that you're a fan of horror."

"You're now included in the list of few ones who know it." Jennie looped back her arm through Lisa's and dragged her.

"Are we seriously going in? I might have a heart attack there, you know..." Lisa was still not moving from her spot while Jennie was pulling her.

"Don't worry, I'll protect you." Jennie tried pulling with much effort this time, but Lisa stayed glued to the ground.

"Please, let's just take the rides instead."

"We'll take the rides later, let's do this first." Jennie pulled Lisa again but the latter won't even budge. "Come on, don't be a wimp now."

"Hey, I'm not a wimp, come here you..." Lisa suddenly pulled Jennie closer to her.

It was too sudden that Jennie's brain wasn't able to process how to balance. She landed face-first on Lisa's neck, breathing in an intoxicating combination of the latter's perfume and body scent. It was just for a split second but it's enough time to completely enthrall her.

"Hey, princess, stop sniffing me.."

Jennie had suddenly awoken from the short-term hypnotism, shoving Lisa away from her. "Excuse me, I'm not."

"Ha, maybe you're not but your blushing face tells me otherwise."

Jennie stomped a foot and turned her body away. "Ugh, I hate you. I hate you."

"Haha! Don't be mad, boss, come here." Lisa put an arm around Jennie's shoulders. "Let's go get some rides now, okay?"

"Nope, no rides yet."

"What? Still not giving up the horror house?"

"Definitely not."

Lisa pinched the bridge of her nose. "Ugh, can we just drop this off?"

Jennie shook her head. "Let's go in now..." She tightened her grip on Lisa's hand and tried pulling the latter to the entrance. When she felt that Lisa isn't budging, she stopped and shot a death glare. "LISA!"

Then from a hard rock, Lisa turned into a soft jelly. "Ugh, nooo."

"WAAAAAH!"

Jennie was laughing crazy at the side of the terrified Lisa. Hearing Lisa's ludicrous yell every once in a while turned the horror house into a comedy show for Jennie.

"Meanie!" Lisa hissed while she was walking close to Jennie. "Jeez! Why does the exit seem so far away?"

"We're still halfway there, could you make sure your heart stays in place?" said Jennie.

"Yah, it's not funny," Lisa glowered. Just before she was able to fully recover from the recent shock, a skeleton jumped out of nowhere and surprised them. "Waaaaaah!"

Jennie was shocked too but after the skeleton disappears she can't help but laugh again. "I wonder what your fan girls would think if they found out that you're a ghost wimp?"

"Ugh, I don't care. Besides, like I said, I'm not afraid of ghosts, okay? I'm afraid of the dark."

"Woo, reasons..."

"Yah, don't tell me you're not scared of anything?"

"Fortunately, I'm not as scaredy cat as you are," Jennie boasted.

"Psh..."

Squeak... Squeak...

Jennie stopped from walking. Lisa halted beside her.

Squeak... Squeak...

Lisa sensed that something is wrong when Jennie reached to link their arms together. "What's the matter?"

"Did you hear that squeaky sound just now?" Jennie raised a finger, signaling for silence.

They stood up silent for few seconds trying to make out another squeak.

"Uhhhh, I don't hear anything," said Lisa, shrugging.

Squeak... Squeak...

"THAT!" Jennie exclaimed, tilting her head left to right to look for the source.

"Yeah, I heard that." Lisa look around too.

"I don't know but I don't like the sound of it." Jennie clenched her hand on Lisa's arm. They were walking slowly.

Squeak... Squeak...

The sound went louder this time. Jennie looked at the direction where the sound came from and even though it was dark, she clearly saw the furry creature walking around just a few inches away from her feet.

"Eeeeeeeeee!" Jennie jumped screaming, rushing to Lisa.

"What was that!" Lisa also panicked, didn't saw what Jennie had seen.

"Rodents! Rodents! Eeeeew!"

"Ah?" Lisa saw the rat moved quickly to get something from one of the boxes on the ground and escaped right away. She felt Jennie's whole body was shaking against hers. "Hey, panicking, it's gone now."

"Where did it go?"

"It ran away after seeing you're scared of him."

Jennie slowly turned around to observe the area. "Is it really gone?"

"I think so..."

It was then when Jennie realized that she was hugging Lisa. "Ohh... I'm sorry..." She jerked from Lisa's hold and fixed her blouse.

"Not scared, huh?" Lisa sniggered, partly covering her mouth with a hand.

"It was a rat, for pete's sake, Lisa..." Jennie folded her arms on her chest.
"And I hate them so much."

"They hate you too, don't worry..." said Lisa, earning a glare from Jennie.

Jennie rubbed her palms over her arms, still can't erase the image of the rodent in her mind. "They are so disgusting, ew!"

"You're afraid of rats and I'm afraid of the darkness, it's just the same thing, right?"

Although it's dark, Jennie saw how Lisa's lips formed into a lopsided smile, which to Jennie is one of Lisa's irresistible assets. She turned around when she realized that she's being possessed again.

"Hmp! At least I'm scared of living things, unlike you, scared of the unknown." Jennie walked forward, leaving Lisa behind.

"Oh, come on, Jennie, wait up!"

"Hey, Lisa, let's take a picture together!"

There was a photo booth near the exit of the horror house. Jennie excitedly pulled Lisa by her arm.

Although Lisa was letting Jennie drag her inside the booth, she voiced out her hesitation. "Uh, don't you think it's creepy to have a photo booth inside a horror house?"

Jennie pushed Lisa's shoulder down, forcing her to sit on the chair. "Oh, come on, it's just for a souvenir." She sat beside Lisa.

"Welcome. Please choose the type of frame you want."

They looked at each other. Lisa shrugged, telling Jennie to choose whatever frame she likes. There's a small screen in front of them. Jennie chose the simple frame with a haunted house silhouette design.

"Thank you. Your picture will be taken in ten.. nine.. eight.."

"This will be a nice souvenir!" Jennie clapped her hands together.

"Seven.. six.. five.. four.."

Jennie leaned her body closer to Lisa. "Make sure you smile, okay?"

"Fine." Lisa pressed the corner of her mouth, attempting to smile but failing.

"Three.. two.. one.."

"BOOOO!"

"Waaaaaaaah!!!"

"Eeeeeeeeeeee!!!"

Before the camera flashed at them, there was sudden scary bam music from the speakers behind while a beheaded figure appeared in front of them and disappeared in a blink. Lisa and Jennie shouted and jumped at the same time.

"That was a nice pose. Your pictures are currently in process. Please wait a second."

"Oh, shit, I thought I was about to die there," Lisa gasped, rubbing a hand over her chest.

On the other hand, Jennie's hands were on her head. "Oh my gosh, oh my gosh..."

"Your pictures are now ready."

Jennie took the picture out and they started laughing again. Instead of them smiling, they were captured screaming. Both their eyes were wildly shocked. Their mouths were opened in fury and scared.

Jennie couldn't make out a word to say. She started to hold her stomach with one hand while the other was still holding on Lisa's arm. "Stop!" she said as she's already feeling her stomach hurt quite a little.

"That was totally crazy!" said Lisa, almost dying while laughing so hard.

"What a nice souvenir." said Jennie, wiping tears of joy from her eyes.

"A scary souvenir I would say." Lisa chuckled. "Would you like to keep both?"

"No. You should get a copy too. The other one is mine and the other is yours."

"Seriously? Do I really need to keep this embarrassment?"

"Yeah, you should. It's a souvenir, okay? Now give me your wallet." Jennie commanded, waving her hand in the air.

"Wallet?"

"Yes, wallet. I'll put the picture in your wallet and I'll put it in mine too."

Lisa scratched her head to protest but Jennie didn't give in. She pulled her wallet from the back pocket and handed it to Jennie.

"This is our first picture for this day, okay?" said Jennie, sliding it in. "You should keep it."

"Yes, boss."

"Good." Jennie continued walking to the exit door.

Lisa took one last look at the place. "Phew, finally. I can't believe I survived this." She turned back to the exit and followed Jennie's trail. "Where to now, boss?"

Jennie turned to her and smiled. "Let's go get some real rides this time."

Triple update because I'm in a good mood. 😊😊😊

Fireworks

6:57 pm

"That. Was. Crazy!"

Lisa stooped down to put her hands on her knees after their horrible roller coaster ride. She gazed at the person in front of her, amazed that the ride hasn't affected Jennie a bit. "You sure you're human? That was a scary ride back there. I almost threw up."

"Told ya, theme park is my kind of place," Jennie boasted. She was about to tease more when she noticed something hanging around Lisa's neck.

"I'll never consider going here again with yo ---- woah!" Lisa took a slight step backward, thinking that Jennie will strangle her or whatever. It was then she realized where Jennie was looking at.

"You're wearing this?" asked Jennie, reaching for the butterfly pendant.

"Ah, yeah." Lisa looked away. "I just thought it'd be a waste not to wear it since we bought it right?"

Jennie continued to fiddle the pendant with her hand. "I just thought you didn't like it..."

"How could I not like it, it's the only souvenir we got from our.. trip..." Lisa trailed off, scratching her nape. It was her only souvenir of them being together, even if it was just a fake relationship.

Jennie's eyes looked up to Lisa for a second and went back to the pendant.

"Y-you don't want me wearing it?" asked Lisa, unsure of what's on Jennie's mind.

"No, it's not like that. I'm feeling bad not wearing mine," said Jennie, touching her collarbone.

"Oh..."

To make up for it, Jennie thought of something. "Let's make a deal. Let's wear those necklaces every day, even in the office. What do you say?"

"Are you sure?" asked Lisa. She is fully aware that Jennie doesn't want the people in the office to know much about their special friendship. Wearing that necklace could mean telling everyone about it, and what's worse giving them the wrong idea.

"Of course. And it's not a request, it's an order." Jennie said seriously.

Lisa felt relieved. "Okay."

"I hope your fan girls won't notice it much..." said Jennie, imagining the idea of how those fan girls would react if they saw it.

"Weeeee... BOOM!"

Their attention was captured by a sudden beam of bright white light glowering in the sky. It was immediately followed by the echoing sound of the exploding firecracker. The first one launched floated in a glittering silver shower, lighting up the sky with its silver outline.

"Woowooow," said Jennie, amazed. She grabbed Lisa's arm and pulled her closer. "Are they celebrating something today?"

Lisa, whose eyes already glued to the sky, replied without looking. "No, they do this during weekends, every seven pm."

Another reflection of bright light caught Jennie's attention, making her look back up at the scene. "This is absolutely amazing, Lisa."

"I know.." Lisa smiled. "It'll be just for five minutes so make sure you enjoy it while it lasts."

"Pop! Pop! Pop!"

"Sssssssss!"

"BOOM!"

"BOBOOOOM!"

"Look, that one is so cool!" Lisa pointed something on their left.

This time it was some firecrackers which whirled in a spiral form first before exploding, illuminating the variation of colors from red, blue, green, and even yellow. Some of them tumbled like waterfalls and some shattered into tiny sparks.

Jennie couldn't help but stare at it in awe. Then she started feeling something in her chest, something warm and giddy. She brought a hand on it and felt it's beatings.

She looked down for a second and noticed a lot of people had crammed to admire the fireworks display too. Some were standing on the chairs and scaffolding to get a better view. Some kids were on their parent's shoulders. Some were holding out there phones and tablets to record it. Some couple's were cuddling while gazing at the scene.

Her attention was brought back to the arm she's holding onto. Jennie's eyes traveled up to Lisa's face and saw the latter's eyes still stuck on the show. Jennie doesn't care about the pretty lights anymore. It's not everyday she gets the chance to look at Lisa this close without worrying about being caught.

Sigh. Why do you always have this effect on me?

Jennie can't hear the fireworks anymore. It's like they've been isolated from that place. It became silent all of a sudden. She was staring at Lisa whose face is completely turned up to the sky.

Her eyes...

Her nose...

Her lips...

Her face...

Why do I feel the need to see you every time?

Was I too dumb not to notice that there is really something special about you?

There was another explosion in the sky and Lisa's skin color changed from red to white, reflecting the light from the fireworks.

Everything just feels so perfect right now. Everything just feels so.. magical.

Consciousness had struck Jennie after noticing that she's been staring for long already. She dropped her gaze and saw Lisa's hand this time. She felt the sudden urge to hold it. She never knew how much she longed for it not until she got the chance to feel it's warmth again last night in the KTV bar. It gives her solace; a safe haven where she could just be vulnerable without worrying that someone will hurt or judge her.

Without saying anything, Jennie slowly slid her hand down and interlaced it with Lisa's. It made the latter turn to her with a bit surprised face.

"Ah?"

Jennie felt embarrassed with what she did but she knew it's too late to turn back now. She hid her face in Lisa's shoulder. "Hey, you said we should enjoy the fireworks while it lasts, right?"

Lisa chuckled. "Ah, y-yeah.." She turned back to the show and squeezed Jennie's hand tight.

Instead of watching the show, Jennie continued to bury her face in Lisa's shoulder. All she could hope for was for the show to extend few minutes more so she could stay like that for a little longer.

Conquered

"Is the pasta good?" asked Lisa, twirling her fork into the mound of spaghetti.

"Mmm-mmm." Jennie could only nod her head while chewing her food.

After the fireworks display, Lisa suggested the nearby Italian restaurant for dinner. Jennie agreed to it immediately because she's not in the mood to go home yet. They waited almost 30 minutes for the food to be served. Jennie usually gets mad at the things like this but today it didn't bother her. Talking to Lisa made her forget her hunger for a while.

Lisa's phone suddenly rang. She took it out of her pocket and glanced at the caller ID before she smiled.

"Excuse me. I need to take this." Lisa stood up to answer the phone.

Jennie's eyes followed as Lisa made her way outside the veranda. There, Lisa stood with one hand in her pocket while talking to whoever on the other line is, occasionally laughing and giggling. Lisa found a hanging paper cupid on the tree beside her and began playing by twirling it with her two fingers.

That's when Jennie noticed the heart and Cupid designs hanging all over the place. She looked around the restaurant and read the tag on one of the posters:

Four days to go before Valentine's Day, who's your date?

Then it hit her: four days remaining. She usually doesn't mind going out alone or staying indoors but this is the first time she felt kind of excited about it. Her eyes jumped back to the person on the veranda who's still busy talking on her phone.

Hmm, should I give her a present? But what would I give her? Wouldn't it be awkward to give her something on Valentine's day?

Her excitement was drained when she saw Lisa laughed heartily. Disappointed, Jennie pursed her lips.

Who could she be talking to? Please, somebody tell me it's not Krystal again.

Krystal's role in Lisa's life is starting to bug her. Her curiosity about the real deal between the two is rising. The first and last time they met, Lisa introduced Krystal as a friend. But who knows what could have happened after that. The only thing Jennie knows is it's not impossible for Krystal to be a fan girl too.

After few more minutes, Lisa went in and sat back in her chair. "Phew! Sorry about that. It was my aunt. She said she misses me."

"Aren't you visiting her?" asked Jennie. The sour face from the misconception earlier turned into a sweet gummy smile.

"I'm busy, she's busy," said Lisa, going back to her pasta. "And I don't like her giving me free food every time I visit her restaurant."

"Restaurant?"

Lisa hummed to agree. "Remember I mentioned before that I love going to Dining in Space restaurant? My Aunt Yaya owns that place."

Jennie dropped her hand on the table. "Wow, really?"

"Yeah. The food their is quite expensive, but they are exquisitely great," said Lisa, stuffing a forkful of spaghetti into her mouth. "I don't want my aunt going bankrupt just because my food is always on her whenever I go there."

"Well, you must be her favorite niece."

That made Lisa smile. "Of course. I'm her only niece, Jennie. She's my dad's only sister and she doesn't have kids."

"Oh, what a small family tree you have there."

Jennie couldn't be happier. They've known each other for a half year now but this is the first time she heard other things about Lisa aside from Irene issues before.

"Hmm, I guess Valentine's is already in the air, huh?" said Lisa, getting distracted by the posters in the area.

"Yeah, for sure couples will line up at N Seoul Tower again," said Jennie.

Lisa chuckled, knowing that there's always an issue in that place during that time of the year. "But you know what, I kinda liked how Koreans and Japanese celebrate Valentine's day."

"Why?"

"Well, in Thailand, Valentine's day is mostly for women," said Lisa, making small circles with her fork. "Their boyfriend's or husband's buy flowers or chocolates for them. In Japan and here in Korea, it's all about men. Women are the ones buying chocolates and giving it to their male friends and love ones. The tradition is kinda cute."

Jennie didn't say anything but her mind is already processing that as a clue.

Lisa's expression changed when an idea hit her. "Hey, what do you say about bringing you to Aunt Yaya's?"

Having no thoughts of playing hard to get, Jennie agreed right away. "I'd love to. Why don't we do it next week?" She secretly hoped that Lisa would take it as a hint for the Valentine's Day.

"Uhm," Lisa scratched the tip of her eyebrow. "Unfortunately, I won't be here next week."

Jennie's face fell. "Y-you won't?"

Lisa smiled apologetically. "Yeah, well, it's my dad's birthday on the fourteenth so he'll be my date on Valentine's Day."

Jennie felt a bit embarrassed thinking that Lisa knew what she was pertaining to. She tucked a stray hair behind her ear and changed the topic. "So, where are you going this time?"

"Indonesia," said Lisa. "I've filed vacation leave from 12th to 14th. I'll be flying tomorrow afternoon. Aunt Yaya called so I could pick up her gift for dad."

Jennie focused her eyes on the spaghetti to hide her disappointment.

That's from Monday to Wednesday. I won't see her for three days straight. Uh, no, it's gonna be four days because it's only Sunday tomorrow.

Sigh... Can I survive that?

9:11 pm

"So.. we're here..." said Lisa, pulling the handbrake. They are already in front of Jennie's gate.

Jennie was so happy the entire day that the time flew fast for her. "Thanks. I had fun. Real fun."

"You had fun making fun of me."

Jennie let out a sweet chuckle. "I didn't know you had a comedian side."

"Yeah, right."

Jennie giggled. "You should be proud. It's not everyday I enjoy a date like this."

"Well, I'm honored, your highness." said Lisa, bowing slightly.

"Thanks to my friends in the horror house, they made my day complete."

"Ugh. Until when are you gonna make fun of me?"

"Oh, come on, let me be, I won't see you for four days, you know."

A smile slipped across Lisa's mouth. "Awe. Does that mean you're going to miss me?"

"You wish."

"Oh, come on, I'm sure you will, right.. right...?"

Jennie felt Lisa poking her arm. "What makes you think so?" she asked Lisa.

Lisa scratched her head for an answer. "Uh, I don't know. Because it would be unfair to me? I'm surely gonna miss you, you know..."

"Aish. Why do you love messing your hair like that?" Jennie reached her hand up to fuss with Lisa's disarrayed hair. "And yes, of course, I'd miss you, Dumbo."

"Awe. I'm so touched."

"Crazy." Jennie shook her head. She raised her hand, thinking of playfully slapping Lisa.

It's a bad move. Lisa grabbed Jennie's hand out of reflex. Jennie knows that she should pull back now but she can't anymore. Lisa is already caressing her hand comfortably, giving her a calm and steady gaze, putting Jennie into a trance.

Lisa, still holding Jennie's hand, brushed a strand of hair away from Jennie's forehead. Jennie felt how Lisa's hand trembled, but she loved the feeling of those fingertips making the barest contact on her skin.

The next thing Jennie noticed is Lisa leaning closer, planting a soft kiss on her forehead. Jennie suddenly felt a quivering ecstasy of joy when those

soft lips were pressed into her skin, totally sending her heart into frenzy. Lisa pulled back shortly but her lips stayed close. Jennie can feel the irregular breathing on her forehead.

"Thank you," whispered Lisa, almost inaudible.

Jennie closed her eyes. She felt how Lisa's lips slightly touched her skin in every movement, giving a tickling sensation. She smiled when she felt Lisa was smiling too against her forehead.

It was oh so magical that she'd like to stay like that for a little while. However, they had to pull away from each other when a headlight from a passing vehicle flashed on them for a second.

"I, uh, I better go now," said Jennie, hooking her bag on her shoulder. "I'll see you next week."

Lisa just gave her a smile and nod.

Jennie went out of the car and managed to sneak a peek before closing the door. "Take care, okay?"

"I will. Good night, Jennie."

"Good night, Lisa."

Jennie wasn't aware how she managed to walk up to her room. Her knees were weakend with what happened inside the car that she collapsed onto her bed immediately. She was glad that her mom isn't home yet because it had saved her from the possible interrogation on how was the hangout with her 'friends.'

And now she's back to staring endlessly at the ceiling. She's no doubt happy, but at the same time, she feels scared of the changes she's feeling lately.

Sigh. Am I losing it?

As far as the dating game is concerned, Jennie had always had her guard up; full gear defense. Yes, she goes out with boys but she's too cautious around them. Although the case is a bit different, because it's a girl this time, but Jennie never felt things from previous dates before the way Lisa had made her feel, or even made her do without inhibitions. She started mentally counting all the notable firsts she experienced that day:

First time I totally enjoyed a date.

First time I had chosen to ignore the fireworks display.

First time I made the first move to hold my date's hand.

First time I had eaten at that Italian restaurant.

First time I've thought of going out with someone on Valentine's Day.

She stopped for a moment before admitting one last thing on her mind. She touched her forehead, trying to recall how it felt earlier. Her heart flutters on the memory of it.

First time I let my date kiss me...

"Shit.." she said in an exhale with her eyes darting quickly around the room.

This time she knows it. Whatever defense she had tried to established all throughout these years; that blockage has already been blown away.

I guess I've already lost it.

The battle for maintaining her sanity is over. Her guard is already torn down. She just smiled at her realization because she never thought it was possible to get such happiness from one person only.

She knows it's useless to pretend to be strong anymore, because whatever mask she puts on to pretend how tough she is it will just boil down to one thing:

Lisa had definitely conquered her.

Admire

Monday - February 12th

The office doesn't look the same now knowing that Lisa isn't there. Jennie did her usual routine even though it was hella boring the entire day.

On the other hand, people couldn't be more excited for the coming Valentine's Day. Their office is now fully decorated with cupids and hearts all over the place. Some colleagues are already struggling in finding a gift for their special someone. Somi even told Jennie that she'll be preparing gifts for Bam and Lisa. Jennie didn't mind, she knows how Lisa feels about Somi.

There are times she notices herself just looking at the Graphics Department's direction, maybe hoping that a certain person would walk out and smile at her.

Her eyes shifted to the wall clock and saw its already 5:01 pm.

Sigh. Just two more days.

When Jennie got home, she saw her mom in the kitchen preparing something.

"Hi, mom, it's a surprise that you're early today," said Jennie, giving her mom a quick kiss on the cheek.

"The meeting with the clients was dismissed early so we decided to call it a day," said her mom, glancing over her quickly and going back to chopping the vegetables.

Jennie dropped her bag on the table and walked to the fridge to get some cold water. "Oh, that's good. Do you want to go out for shopping or

something? Maybe unwind a little?"

"I don't think unwinding is a good idea now. We'll be stuck in the pre-Valentine's Day traffic."

"I just thought you could, you know, relax for a bit. You're always busy with your work. Maybe we could eat dinner outside?"

"Let's do that next time, I'm already preparing our dinner, darling."

Jennie leaned over the kitchen table and stared at her mom's back while swirling the glass in her hand. Since her dad passed away her mom had busied herself over work. Their loss was hard for both of them but Jennie knew it was harder for her mom. They even have to move out from their previous house because her mom wasn't really recovering at all.

Despite the business and the grieving, her mom never failed to be a mother to Jennie. She grew up having a mom and a best friend at the same time. But there are times she wonders if her mom is happy. She won't mind if her mom would remarry someday, she'd love that, at least someone would take care of her in a way that Jennie couldn't provide.

But just looking at her mom now Jennie knows it's impossible. Her mom never forget her dad. There were suitors who came in and tried but it didn't work out. She knows that her mom still lingers in her dad's memory. There are nights that she still sees her mom talking to her dad's picture.

"Mom?"

"Hmm?"

"Don't you ever want to have a boyfriend again?"

Her mom stopped chopping. "What kind of question is that?"

"I'm just curious." Jennie shrugged. "I won't mind, just so you know. I just want you to be happy again."

Her mom put down the knife and turned to her with a wry smile. "Why, are you getting married and planning to leave me soon?"

"Nope. I just want you to have a boyfriend. That's all. Period."

"And why do you want me to have a boyfriend all of a sudden? Do you have one already?"

"Ugh, we're talking about you here, mom." Jennie suddenly got defensive. She's afraid that this conversation may lead to prying more about her love life. "And I'm still single, okay?"

The older woman folded her arms across her chest and stared at her daughter with skeptical eyes.

"What?" asked Jennie, feeling conscious about it.

"You may not say it but I've been noticing something different about you lately."

Jennie swallowed something in her throat. "Noticing what?"

"Just slight changes: frequent humming, eagerness to go to the office, constantly looking at your phone, plus your mood has been oddly light lately." The older woman tapped a finger on her chin. "Is my daughter, by any chance, finally in love?"

Jennie felt uneasy with the question. She had to look away. "I told you, mom, I'm single."

"I know, but being single doesn't mean you're not in love with someone, right?"

"I'm not, mom, okay? Don't worry; you'll be the first person to know about it just in case I fall in love soon," said Jennie, brushing stray of hairs from her face in an attempt to cover up possible blushing.

"If you say so. I'm just here anytime you're ready to tell me about it."

Her mom turned back to the veggies. Jennie took it as an opportunity to escape to her room right away.

Sigh...

Jennie plopped herself on the bed, wrinkled her nose and massaged her temples with her palms. She had been fidgeting the entire conversation because the only person who popped into her head when her mom threw that million-dollar question was Lisa.

Shit. This can't be.

There's no use in denying it anymore. At some point, somehow, yes, she's attracted to Lisa, but she isn't sure if it's love or not. She never really had liked someone so bad before so there's no point of comparison. Plus, she's still seeing her feelings for Lisa as momentary admiration, considering that Lisa has the same effect on most of the girls.

Jennie pulled out her wallet and chuckled at the sight of their picture from the horror house. It was when she realized how much she's missing Lisa now. It's only been two days since she last saw her but it feels like they haven't talked in ages. She ran a finger across the picture.

Sigh...

Forgive me for being dense about this because this is all new to me. But of you were to judge what I'm feeling now, what would you say?

Jennie dropped her hands to her side and closed her eyes after another loud sigh.

Tell me, Lisa, am I already in love with you?

Surprise

Tuesday - February 13th - 7:11 pm

"What's cooking?"

"Oh, you're home," said Jennie, turning to her mom who's standing by the door. "Umm, it's nothing. I bought a roasted chicken for dinner. Would you like to eat now?"

"Maybe a little later after I change," said her mom. The older lady stretched her neck out in attempt to see what's keeping her daughter busy. "What are you preparing?"

"Just umm, a little something for my team."

"Homemade chocolates?" her mom asked after getting a glimpse of the ingredients. "For your team, you said?"

Jennie nodded. "Yeah."

"Valentine's present?"

"Yeah, something like that." Jennie grabbed a bowl and started stirring a mixture into it. "I want to give them something special."

"I don't buy that, Jennie."

"You don't buy what?"

"You're preparing something for the team? I'm surprised that this is the first time you did that."

"It's for a change, mom. I need to treat them once in a while."

The older lady leaned on the door frame and folded her arms across her chest. "Seriously, Jennie, just tell me who the lucky guy is."

"Mom!" Jennie made a face immediately. "There's no guy, okay?" She turned around right away because she felt she's starting to blush.

"Whatever." Her mom chuckled. "I just hope your *team* will love that," she said before leaving the area to go to her room.

Jennie just smiled to herself. *I seriously hope she will.*

Wednesday --- February 14th

There were flowers on the table already waiting for her when Jennie came in the office. Some of them were from unknown admirers while some have names on it. Of course, she always feels flattered receiving those but it's not enough to win her. Truth is she's starting to wonder herself on what could even win her.

Not too long the interns came in with Somi holding a bouquet in her hands. Jennie met eyes with Bam and made a face to discreetly ask him whom the flowers came from. He answered her with a coy smile.

Okay, I get it, Bam.

Suho came in shortly and handed all the females in their team a long-stemmed red rose. He cringed in disgust when Jennie joked that he's the one she's been waiting for. It was a fun day because everyone was in the mood to give love. However, Jennie can't keep her eyes away from graphics department area from time to time.

Phew, just one more day to go. One more day. Everything will be okay again tomorrow.

1:07 pm

Jennie is currently reading an article when the reception guard placed a box on her table. "What's that?" she asked, looking up at him.

"For you.." the guard said, tapping a hand on top of the box.

"For me? From who?"

"I don't know.." he shrugged while looking at the papers in his hands. "A man delivered it just now and it says here... 'from honey'..."

Jennie's eyes widened. *Honey?*

"Honey?" Suho stood up from his chair to look over. "Who's honey, Jen?"

Jennie shook her head slowly. "I... I don't know..."

Before anyone could react further, the guard tapped the box one last time and said, "I'll leave it here, alright?" Jennie nodded and said her thanks before he left. That's when the confusion started to fill her face as she stared at the mysterious box in front of her.

From honey.. from honey.. from honey..

Jennie kept on repeating the words in her mind like a mantra. Although it's true that she doesn't know who the sender is, it will be a lie if she would say she has no idea at all. So far, she had used that endearment to one person only.

Could it be?

"Aren't you going to open it?" Suho, who still looking over, motioned to the box.

Jennie shook her head no. She doesn't want to open it yet, not until she's alone. If her suspicion is correct then she'd want to see that present all by herself only.

However, the box made quite a scandal which surely had intrigued her colleagues. "Let's take a look!" Somi stood up and slightly shook the box.

"Wow. It's light."

Rosé went over to inspect the box too. "Honey? Just as I thought, you were hiding something from me, Jennie."

"I didn't know that Ms. Jennie has a boyfriend." said Somi.

"I didn't know that too, Somi, considering that I'm her best friend," said Rosé, folding her arms across her chest.

Suho walked over to them and eyed Jennie skeptically. "Yeah. You knew all the things about us but you're keeping your secrets from us, your friends?" He placed a hand on his chest and yowled. "Agh, it hurts!"

Feeling pressured by the three people standing in front of her, Jennie brought her arms mid-air and reasoned, "Guys, I don't have a boyfriend, okay? You all know me. I don't even know who sent that."

Suho and Rosé looked at each other quick. Rosé shrugged and Suho turned to Jennie and said, "If you're saying that you don't know who the sender is then why don't we take a look what's inside?"

"I second that motion," Rosé agreed right away.

Jennie still doesn't want to. She looked up at the people in front of her, trying to see if her glare would work. It did not. Their glares are much more powerful than hers.

Her eyes finally softened in defeat. *Ugh. Fine.*

Jennie blew air from her mouth before standing up from her chair. She's not feeling excited about this, rather nervous, afraid that the box might contain any clue of the sender's identity. She brought a hand to the top of the box and sighed.

Here goes nothing.

She opened the box nonetheless, with the audiences at the back, and inside it saw a green stuffed toy looking up at them. Everyone gasped in awe

while Jennie couldn't believe what she's seeing.

"It's so cute!" said Somi.

"Totally." said Suho. He looked back at the stuffed toy and noticed something. "Wait a minute, is it just me or it looks like Mrs. Lee?"

"Yeah, it's look like the same exact stuffed toy, Jen." said Rosé.

"No." Jennie can't help but smile at the sight of the toy she's been looking to find for a long time now. "I think this is Mr. Lee." She picked up the toy and read the note attached to it: *I guess he got a little lost on his way back to his wife. The long wait is over. He's finally home.*

--- *Honey*

"Kyaaaah!" Rosé squirmed with glee while shaking Jennie's shoulder. "Who's honey, Jen? Tell me, who?"

"I told you, I have no idea..." Jennie denied once again even though she can't take the smile off her face. She flipped the alien stuffed toy that looks exactly like Mrs. Lee except for the missing eyelashes. "This is indeed Mr. Lee."

Somi picked up the Mrs. Lee and raised it in to congratulate it. "Weeee, even Mrs. Lee has a date today!"

Jennie couldn't believe it. She doesn't know how *Honey* did it but she's definitely surprised and delighted to receive this gift today. All the flowers and chocolates she got this morning didn't matter anymore. She hugged and kissed the alien to welcome it.

"Whoever that guy is, I already like him," said Suho, nudging Jennie.

"Why?" Jennie asked, still not taking her eyes off the alien.

"Because this is the first I've seen you smile like that after receiving a present."

"Hmm, why? Was I not smiling before?"

"Let's just say that your smile is different today."

"How so?"

Suho waved his hand. "Forget it. It's too hard to explain. But could you do me a favor? If this guy would reveal himself and will ask you for a date, could you please go out with him?"

Jennie raised the alien again and stared at its cute big round eyes. "Don't worry, I surely will."

5:37 pm

Jennie was on her way home when she heard her phone ringing inside her bag. She smiled after seeing the caller ID and answered it right away.

"Hey, honey, how's it?"

"Honey your face.." said Jennie, laughing softly.

"Is that the proper way to greet the finder of your long-lost alien?"

"Crazy.." Jennie was trying to hold off her smile because she doesn't want to attract the attention of her fellow passengers on that subway. But she can't help it, hearing Lisa's voice just makes her heart flutter. "Thanks for the gift, Lisa."

"You're welcome. I hope I surprised you with that."

"Yeah, you did. In fact, you surprised everyone. They were bugging me for that mysterious sender."

"Haha! I knew the delivery would attract some attention so I had to be more discreet."

"Even so, the 'honey' still got a LOT of attention. The girls went crazy about it." Jennie rolled her eyes remembering how she was ganged up.

"I had no choice. I had to use it so you would know it came from me. What did they say to you?"

"Well, Rosé and Suho were accusing me of keeping a relationship secret from them."

"Haha! Guess I put you in trouble with that."

"A bit." Jennie sighed. "I was just glad that their attention was diverted immediately to the meet up of Mr. and Mrs. Lee."

"Ah, really? Tell me about it."

"Suho and Rosé played them, took pictures and created a drama story," said Jennie, smiling at the memory of Rosé and Suho voicing the conversation of the two aliens. "By the way, how did you find it?"

"Dad and I were strolling around the mall looking for a place to eat when we passed by a toy store on sale. That's when I saw that alien. Problem is, it was the last stock they have, and it was trouble getting it because I had to bribe a kid to not buy it."

"What? You had to pay a kid to get it?"

"Yeah, a few bucks. The kid won't let it go at first."

"Wow. How did you manage to deliver it to the office without the courier's label on it?"

"I got help from Jisoo, haha. I had it delivered to her place and asked her to buy a fancy box for it. She was the one who brought it to the office earlier, without Rosé's knowledge of course."

Jennie remembered the guard told her that it was delivered by a man. She just smiled at the idea that the guard mistook Jisoo for a guy.

It's not a new thing for Jennie to receive gifts during this time of the year, however, this is the first time she felt so happy about receiving something. She loves the alien so much that she couldn't take her eyes off in the entire afternoon.

It just makes her wonder, was she happy because of the gift or was it because of the sender?

"So, how are you?" asked Jennie instead, trying to erase the little confusion building up in her mind.

"I'm good, I'm good. Never been better."

"Enjoying yourself over there?"

"Yeah. Dad's been busy so I just toured around here and took some pictures. We're currently here in Bali."

"What time is your flight? You're supposed to be here by tomorrow, right?"

"Uh, well, there's a little problem. All flights had been canceled for now due to the storm signal warning."

What? No!

Jennie remembered the news this morning about the strong typhoon that will be hitting Indonesia. "Oh. You can't go home yet?"

"I'm afraid not yet. And if this continues until Friday, I might go back there by Sunday instead. I just found it now that's why I called you."

Jennie's energy and excitement for tomorrow were totally drained because of the bad news. Her week has been hella boring and now she needs to endure additional boring days before she could see Lisa again.

"Calling me just to tell me the bad news?" said Jennie, sighing.

"Partly, yes.. but I also want to hear your voice."

"Stop with the sweet-talking, Lisa."

"Hey, I'm not kidding. It's gonna take few more days before I could see you again so hearing your voice could somehow cure me from missing you."

Nothing is more comforting than to know that the person you're missing most is missing you at the same time. Jennie was about to give in and smile however the idea of not seeing Lisa for the entire week took away her excitement again. She let out a displeased sigh instead. She knows there is a big possibility that flights are still unavailable even tomorrow.

"Hey, are you okay? You're not talking."

"I'm okay."

"Well, you don't sound like it. What's the matter?"

"I don't know. I guess I just got stressed in the office."

"Too many flowers to carry?" Lisa's voice sounded like she was smiling.

Jennie shook her head no even though Lisa can't see it. "I left them all at my table."

"Woah, woah, woah, so you really got flowers?"

"Few."

"Wow. Just wow."

"Hey, don't wow me yet. I bet you have more presents waiting for you at your table. Apparently, two of those were from my teammates."

"We'll find out once I come back there. By the way, where are you now?"

"On the subway, heading home."

"Is that the reason you're sound grumpy? No date on Valentine's night?"

"I have a date, excuse me."

"Woah! With whom?"

"With my mom," said Jennie, chuckling.

"Oh, nice. So.. there's no dinner date, like a romantic date with someone, right?"

Jennie giggled, enjoying hearing Lisa's somewhat-jealous-tone. "How could I? My date is too busy looking for a alien stuffed toy in Indonesia."

"HAHAHAHAHA!"

"And what's so funny about it?"

"Your date is crazy, leaving you alone like that."

"I know. Should I find someone else to date instead?"

"No, of course not. Let me make it up to you when I come back, okay?"

"IF you're still coming back. Unfortunately, you're stuck in there, Lisa."

"Oh, come on. If I could swim there now I would, you know. Wait a minute, does that mean you're missing me too?"

Jennie smiled. "Shhh. Not a chance, Lisa, not a chance..."

"Seriously?"

"Seriously what?"

"You're not missing me? Not at all?"

"Are you really asking me that? You should know the answer yourself, Lisa."

"But I want to hear it."

"Want to hear what?"

"Your answer."

"Ugh, you're not making any sense."

"Come on, come on, just let me hear it, please..."

Jennie doesn't know what kind of sorcery Lisa has but it just weakens her, making her give in. She rolled her eyes and said, "Fine. I miss you. Happy now?"

"Weeee! Of course!"

"You're such a kid, Lisa."

"Just a kid at heart. But you know what, honestly, I think I'm missing you more than you're missing me."

Jennie's eyebrows rose. "Mmm? How so?"

"Because I'm missing you so badly now that I already regret going here in the first place."

That surely made Jennie smile again. "Hey, don't say that. It's your dad's birthday, right?"

"I know. It's just that it feels like something has been missing. My only consolation of going here is seeing my dad, aside from that everything doesn't make sense. And sadly, all I could do now is to send you that fluffy alien."

Getting drowned by flattery, Jennie's emotion took over. "You have no idea how badly I'm missing you now, Lisa."

"Really? You do?"

"Yeah, you don't want to believe me?"

"It's just too good to be true. If you only knew how badly I want to go back to what happened last Saturday, going out with you and just having fun."

It took Jennie a great deal of effort to repress a smile because she doesn't want her fellow passengers to think that she's like a teenager who's completely twitterpated with the person on the other line. Her eyes were darting quickly around the subway and through the windows but none of the images she's seeing are registering on her mind. All she could see now is Lisa.

There's no point in denying it. She knows she's missing Lisa more than she should. It's something she cannot control any longer.

"Oh, I can't wait to see you."

"I can't wait to see you too. By the way, Jennie..."

"Yes?"

"Uhm, can we talk when I get back?"

"Of course, we can, you still owe me a date, right?"

Lisa chuckled at that. *"Yeah, right. But what I meant is can we talk about something?"*

"About what?"

"Maybe.. umm.. talk about.. us?"

Jennie brought a hand to her chest after feeling nervous all of a sudden. "A-about us?"

"Yeah... Don't you think we need to talk about 'this'?"

Jennie was lost of words for a moment there, unsure of what to say. Although undefined yet, it is evident now that something is going on between the two of them. Jennie knows herself that it's not one of her ordinary flings, it's more special than that, and it's getting deeper each day.

Since the day they met, Lisa has been giving her all these roller-coaster feelings that are all new to her. They may be hard to explain but she loves having those feelings, at the same time she hates them, especially now because they are giving her a hard time for missing Lisa so badly.

But above all that a big part of her surely wants to know Lisa's side of the story. Is she feeling the same thing or is this all part of her sweetness that she does to everyone.

Despite the dilemma and doubt, Jennie finally made her decision. "You're right, we really need to talk."

How are you guys? 😊😊😊

Thank you for reading this story. So much love blinks. ♥

Setup

Jennie has been zoning out after that call from Lisa. She's both excited and worried. She wants to clarify the real deal between them but at the same time, she's worried, afraid that the talk will lead them to the crossing line.

She's scared because she knows she won't be able to hold herself back any longer. And what would happen if her mom finds out? Will she hide it? She knows there's no way her mom would accept something like that.

In the middle of her musing, Jennie noticed an unfamiliar black car parked in front of their gate.

Mom has a visitor? Oh, wait, was that the reason for the sudden restaurant dinner?

"I can smell a new suitor here," said Jennie, kissing her mom who met her right away when she entered the gate.

"Sshh, lower your voice. I met a new client this morning and we're going out with him for dinner," her mom said, pulling Jennie inside.

"We? Why do I still have to come along with you guys? You don't need a chaperone to watch over you."

"No more questions." The older lady pushed Jennie into the house. "You look okay with your attire so you entertain him first while I go get dressed, okay?"

"Sure." Jennie couldn't help but feel more excited for her mom. She shook her head as she watched the older lady strode upstairs.

She seems excited about this date, huh.

She looked around the area and noticed a tall and slender image standing in their living room. The guy's back was facing her. He's busy looking at the

picture frames, an opportunity that Jennie didn't pass to observe him a little more. He's wearing white long sleeve polo and black fitted slacks, a coat over one arm.

I must admit that back really looks handsome. I'm glad that mom still has a good taste in men.

The sound of her healed shoes tapping across the tiled floor made the guest turned around. "Hey," he said.

Jennie's mouth fell agape when she found herself staring at those familiar full eyes. "T-taehyung?"

"Uh, y-yeah. What's with the shocked face?" he asked with a smile.

Jennie immediately took her eyes away from him. "Uh... I'm surprised to see you here..."

"I was surprised to see your mom too earlier."

"W-where did you guys meet?"

"We're about to hire them for their service. I was the one tasked to go to the meeting," said Taehyung, putting a hand inside his pocket. "We met and had a little catching up. Then she asked me if I have a date tonight, I said no, that's when she invited me out."

"Ahhh."

So that's the reason for the sudden reservation. But wait a minute, she said she had reserved for two only, right?

As if on cue, her mom went down and told them, "Hey kids, mind if you go alone tonight? I'm having a terrible headache."

Jennie rolled her eyes. *Ugh, mom!*

"Are you going to be alright if we leave you alone?" asked Taehyung. "We can just cancel the dinner so Jennie here could look after you."

Jennie blushed a little hearing Taehyung call her name. She never used hearing him calling her that way. She remembered Hanbin and him calling her Tiny when they were younger.

"No, I'm gonna be fine, son." The older lady waved a hand. She went over to Jennie and winked, pretending to fix her daughter's collar. "You two enjoy yourselves, for now, okay?"

Jennie had a quick eye contact with Taehyung before she eyed her mom and whispered, "This is awkward, mom."

"You said you don't have a boyfriend, right?" her mom whispered back. She turned to Taehyung and asked with her normal voice, "If it's fine with you, Taehyung?"

"Y-yeah, it's.. it's fine, as long as it's okay with Jennie too."

Jennie saw her mom's triumphant smile and knows she can't escape this setup anymore. "Yeah, sure, I'm cool with that."

"Oh, good." Taehyung raised his arm to glance at his watch. "So, shall we?"

Restaurant

"I sincerely apologise if everyone mistook you for my girlfriend," said Taehyung, pouring salt on his food. "I swear, if your mom didn't ditch us this wouldn't seem like a romantic date."

Jennie can't stop giggling seeing Taehyung's embarrassment. "I don't mind, don't worry. Can't blame them. It's the time of the year."

Taehyung puffed his cheeks and sighed. "Yeah. This is the place where we usually hold meetings with our clients so we're pretty much friends with the staffs. I believe this is the first time they had seen me alone with a woman."

"Oh. So that's where their excitement came from."

Taehyung smiled and shook his head. He put down the salt shaker. "Are you sure nobody's going to kill me for having a dinner with you tonight?"

"Nobody that I'm aware of," said Jennie, slicing her steak. She heard Taehyung chuckled so she followed up, "No, seriously, I don't have a boyfriend."

"Oh, enjoying your individuality?"

"You could say that. I don't know. Honestly, I'm not really a big fan of dating."

"Being single has its perks," Taehyung said before bringing a steak into his mouth. "It is something I'm also enjoying at the moment."

"I can't imagine Hanbin saying that."

Taehyung laughed heartily. "That dude cannot stay alive single even for a minute only. I already lost count on how many girlfriends he had introduced to us."

Jennie continued to observe the man in front of her. He looks more relaxed and vibrant now compared to how he was during New Year's Eve. It just made Jennie remember why she had liked him before. And she is glad that their conversation is coming more natural now even though this is the first time they've been alone.

"I never knew that you can be talkative," said Jennie.

"Why, do I always seem boring to you?"

"Not really boring but, you know, just a little harder to read compared to Hanbin."

"Well, we won't be able to enjoy this dinner if I won't talk, right?"

"You're right. Maybe I'm just used seeing you with that mysterious aura all the time."

Taehyung covered his mouth with the tablecloth as he laughs. "Should I take that as a compliment?"

"Well, you should. Being mysterious can sometimes be attractive."

"Oh, really? You think so?" Taehyung smirked.

It's just now that Jennie realized what she said. "Y-yeah... I mean... there are girls who really prefer mysterious guys over the talkative ones, right?"

"Maybe.. maybe..." Taehyung shrugged. "Since we're already in this, why don't you tell me what happened to you after we met on New Year's Eve?"

Jennie looked around the room while trying to recall anything from these past few months. "Umm, nothing really special. I'm still working in this same office, taking care of the interns."

"No tripping or whatever?"

"I went to Ramada Hotel & Resort Gyeongju in Gampo Beach last month with a friend."

Taehyung's face lit up after hearing the resort's name. "Ahh, yeah, that place is awesome, right?"

"Yes." The place is indeed a paradise but Jennie seemed to remember just the moments she had there; the Irene issues, Kyungsoo's kindness, Jisoo's words of wisdom, especially moments with Lisa.

"You sure it's just a friend?" asked Taehyung.

"Huh?"

"You said you went out with a friend, right? You sure that person is only a friend?"

Jennie blinked. "Y-yeah.. why?"

"I dunno. Your mood just changed when you mentioned that friend of yours."

Jennie looked away and realized that she needs to change the topic. "How about you, what happened to you after New Year's Eve?"

"Honestly, it wasn't easy," Taehyung sighed. "I'm not sure if you remember but my dad was correct when he said before that I recently broke up with my long-term girlfriend."

"Was it a bad break up?"

"It was, for me. She was my girlfriend for five years and I just can't believe everything's over like that.. just.. just in a snap," he said, snapping his fingers.

"Why did you guys break up --- if you don't mind me asking..."

"All cool, don't worry," said Taehyung. "Sana is the outgoing type of person while me, like you already know, is a boring one. We, or should I say she, started having issues with my dullness and I guess she just wants some adventure that I'm not capable of giving her."

So, her name is Sana.

Partly, Jennie somehow envied the ex-girlfriend for getting a chance to date her childhood crush. "You took it the hard way?"

"I did. I've been crying every night for the first few weeks," Taehyung admitted with a chuckle. "It's just recently that I was able to regain myself again. Maybe just like a month ago?"

"Well, that's a good news."

"Yeah. It serves a lesson to me. To lessen my boringness next time," he joked.

"You're not as boring as you think you are," said Jennie, looking at him. "You just haven't found your right puzzle piece for you yet."

Taehyung just smiled. "Thanks."

After Taehyung dropped her off, Jennie entered through the front door and saw her mom sitting in the living room, watching TV.

"How was it?" the older lady asked.

"It was okay."

"Did you guys have fun?"

Although Jennie always imagined that it would be awkward to be alone with Taehyung, surprisingly everything went well tonight. "Yeah, I had fun... I guess... I just don't know about him."

"Are you worried that you bored him?"

"No, not really."

"Do you think he likes you?"

"Ugh, mom, I still haven't forgiven you for setting me up for a date, okay?" Jennie grunted.

"Well, I thought you enjoyed it?"

"I did."

"Then what's the matter?"

Jennie brought her palms to her cheeks and said, "It's just embarrassing. I think he knows that you just set us up."

"Isn't it a good sign that he stayed even though he felt that it was a setup?"

"He just stayed because he can't say no to you."

"Well, I believe you got it wrong, Jennie," her mom said, crossing one leg over the other. "I just got him to say yes when I told him that I'll invite you over."

"No way. Mom, I know you like him but you're being delusional."

"I'm not being delusional."

"You are..."

"Are you telling me that you don't like him anymore?"

Jennie knew she should say yes but it just didn't come out. She cleared her throat first but before she could say another word, the news on the TV caught her attention.

"Authorities have received reports of some flooding and landslides after the storm made landfall in Indonesia..."

Jennie stared blankly at the TV screen, somewhat worried about the person who's been giving her the unexplainable feelings.

Lisa...

The real reason she didn't like what her mom did is because she felt like she was betraying Lisa for going out with Taehyung tonight. And the fact that she enjoyed their little date made her feel worse.

"I'm not forcing you to him," her mom said, breaking Jennie's thoughts. "I just want you to give yourself a chance, to be with the right one for you."

"Are you saying that he is the right one for me?" asked Jennie, pointing at herself.

"I didn't say that. What I'm saying is you should try letting some men get in your life. You always reject anyone who tries to court you."

"It's because we don't click. You know that mom. It's not like I never tried going out with them. And if I remember it correctly, you never liked any of

those guys too, right?"

"Yeah, you're right," said the older lady. "But I like this one now. I've know him since your diaper days so I'm comfortable with the idea of you going out with him. And don't you think there's a reason why we met today, why you both met again today?"

"But mom ---"

"You wouldn't know if he's the right guy for you if you wouldn't try it with him, right?"

Jennie's shoulders fell at the term "the right guy for you".

She reiterated the statement in her mind as she turned her attention back to the TV. She knows that no matter how much she likes Lisa now it won't matter because her mom will never agree to it. On the other hand, Taehyung has already gotten a ticket for her mom's approval.

"We don't even know if he likes me or not," said Jennie instead.

"Then why don't we make a deal?"

"Deal?"

"If Taehyung come back here and ask you for a date you'll try to go out with him. If he doesn't then I would never set you up with another guy, okay?"

Jennie stared at her mom for a few seconds, trying to sense if she's serious about it. But her mom didn't flinch a bit. "Why are you doing this, mom?"

"Because I know that there's a part of you in there that still likes him. Just give it a try. Who knows, you might be thanking me after this."

Jennie didn't have to think it thoroughly. She knows that Taehyung hasn't fully moved on from his ex-girlfriend. Although at some point she still likes him, she's not hoping for anything. If what happened earlier happened long time ago, she would be the happiest girl in the world. But things are just different now.

Knowing that the chances of Taehyung coming back are slim, Jennie agreed to it. "Sure, mom. Deal."

Chance

Taehyung didn't show up the next day, making Jennie think that he's not really interested. She is happy because her mom would finally stop bugging her. It also helped in lessening her confusion because truth is, even though she may not admit it to herself, he still has effect on her.

At some point, the little girl that had been crushing on him since the day Jennie can't remember is still inside her, which brings her to feel partly disappointed to thinking that her charisma has not even affected him at all.

On the other hand, Lisa has not called her yet. Jennie's been waiting for the call since Valentine's Day because she knows that hearing Lisa's voice would somehow help her forget her mom and Taehyung for a little while.

But what's adding up to her confusion is her feelings towards Lisa. She's not sure how to explain it. She's not even sure how it differs from what she's feeling to Taehyung. It's similar at some point but totally different in general.

Is there a way she could find out which matters most?

It was Sunday afternoon, after a trip to the grocery store, when Jennie and her mom saw the familiar black car in front of their gate.

"Now look at that," her mom said, pulling the car over.

Jennie's eyes widened when Taehyung went out from the driver's side and walked towards them.

No way. Why is he here?

"Hey," he said, leaning inside the car window on her mom's side.

"Hey, darling, it's great to see you," said the older woman, pinching Taehyung's cheek. "Where have you been? Jennie has been waiting for you

since Thursday."

"Mom!"

"I'm just kidding, darling. Don't take it seriously."

"I was in an out of town business trip these past few days. I just came back last night," said Taehyung, smiling shyly at them.

"How long have you been waiting there? You should have called me or Jennie to tell us you're dropping by. We went out to get some groceries."

"Nah, its fine. It was just for a couple of minutes. And I don't have your numbers yet..."

"Oh, I'll give it to you inside, okay?" said Jennie's mom.

"That would be great," said Taehyung. "By the way, can I help you with the groceries?"

"Thanks for the help," said Jennie's mom, handing Taehyung a glass of cold water.

"Oh, thanks," said Taehyung before drinking it all. He handed back the glass. "And you're welcome."

"Do you have something to do this evening? I hope you could stay for dinner."

Mom's really pushing it.

Jennie shook her head and smiled to herself. She's currently putting the condiments they bought in the cabinet while overhearing the conversation happening in the kitchen.

"Umm, well.." said Taehyung, shifting his eyes from the older lady to Jennie, "I was hoping I could take Jennie out for dinner..."

Jennie turned around and looked at him, surprised. *What?*

"Really?" Jennie's mom was surprised too.

"Y-yeah." Taehyung nodded hesitantly. "If... If.. if only Jennie's available..."

"Yeah, sure, of course, son," the older lady answered right away. "She doesn't have plans for the entire day either, so don't worry. Am I right, Jennie?"

Jennie saw her mom's look, reminding her of the deal they made. She knows she can't say no this time. "Y-yes, of course."

Taehyung took Jennie to a waterfront restaurant where they had a multi-course dinner overlooking a lake. It wasn't a romantic but it isn't that casual either. Jennie can't guess what's going on Taehyung's mind.

Although she thought it would be awkward, like her previous date before, Jennie was surprised that she's having fun again.

After their dinner, they went for a moonlit stroll at the park. The area is filled with little dim lights making the star filled sky more visible. They are enjoying the fresh cold wave of the northeast monsoon, making the two of them feel more relaxed. Most people around were couples having their own little world.

"So, you mean you never had a boyfriend? Not at all?" asked Taehyung. They were walking slowly around the area with a cup of coffee in their hands.

"Not at all. Why, don't I seem to be like that?" said Jennie, tucking a strand of stray hair behind her ear.

"Nah. I just thought that when you said you're single, it meant that you had past lovers. It didn't occur to me that you were never in a relationship before."

"Yeah. Never been hitched," said Jennie.

Taehyung chuckled. "Why?"

"Why what?"

"Why not date? Don't tell me you never had suitors. I won't believe that."

Jennie cupped her free hand over her head to prevent her hair from getting messier because of the wind. "I had quite a few... I even went out with them, but I guess it just didn't work out for me."

"Why? Were you looking for something specific?"

Jennie scrunched up her face and looked up the sky as if she could see the answers there. "I really don't know. Honestly, I'm starting to think that maybe I'm the one with issues here, not them."

"That's crazy!" Taehyung laughed. "You don't have issues. You just haven't found your right puzzle piece for you yet."

A smile slipped across Jennie's face, remembering the same exact line she told him on their first dinner date.

"See? I remember that," said Taehyung, pointing a finger at her. "But do you happen to like someone now?"

"To be honest, I'm not sure."

"Mmm.. so.. there is someone, right?"

Jennie nodded. "But I'm not sure if it's just a simple like or ---" she paused and looked around the area first. "How would you know if you're already in love with someone?"

Taehyung blinked few times. "I don't.. know... Maybe if you start getting hurt because of him."

Jennie secretly smiled at Taehyung's usage of "him".

"So, you're not sure yet if you just like him or if you already love him, right?" asked Taehyung, getting a nod from Jennie. "How about him, do you think he likes you?"

"Mmm, I'm not sure. *He's* making me feel special.. but I'm not sure yet..." Jennie trailed off, getting worried a little with Lisa's true intentions. "We haven't talked about it. And the truth is I'm a bit torn over my feelings now."

"Torn? How?"

"I'm pretty sure you know how much my mom is vouching for you, right?"

"Yeah, felt that since New Year's Eve," said Taehyung, laughing softly.

"Pretty obvious, eh?" Jennie grimaced, feeling embarrassed. "The problems is, compared to you, I knew there's no way my mom would like *him*."

"Why wouldn't she?"

"It's just.. too complicated... Hey, you wanna know a secret?"

"Secrets are exciting."

"Brace yourself then."

"Oooh, sounds scary..." Taehyung shuddered, hugging himself.

"How should I say this? Hmm. The reason why my mom is vouching for you so hard is because she knows that I always had a crush on you when we were little," admitted Jennie.

Taehyung's eyes widened. "What? R-really?"

"Yeah. But that was long, long time ago," said Jennie, looking away and blushing a little.

"Wow. Until when?"

"Mmm, not sure. Maybe when we moved out from the village? But that was a long time ago. You still look likeable to me but I think my mom likes you more than me now."

Taehyung laughed again. "Hey, you wanna know my secret? I've got a crush on you too before."

"Is this a joke?" asked Jennie, raising an eyebrow.

"I'm serious," said Taehyung, putting a finger on his chest to make an 'x' sign.

Jennie couldn't take her eyes away from Taehyung's chest because of what he just did. She remembered a certain person who did that before.

Not having an idea what's going on in Jennie's mind, Taehyung continued, "You always made me feel freaking nervous when you're near. That's the reason why I don't talk to you whenever Hanbin isn't around. Could you guess when it stopped?"

"When your family moved out of the village?" asked Jennie.

"Spot on!" Taehyung snapped his fingers. "But to be honest, I still find you attractive as you are when we were just kids. And after that dinner date the other day, I realized that we somehow clicked. I don't know if you felt the same but I enjoyed that night. I'm really thankful that your mom asked me out. And I knew that there is a reason why we met again that day, I just don't know the reason yet."

"Dis you purposely look for my mom last Wednesday?"

"No, that wasn't planned," said Taehyung. "I had no idea that your mom works there. And I didn't expect her to invite me to dinner."

So, mom's telling the truth then. Jennie thought.

"Is it just me or is it really starting to feel awkward around here?" asked Taehyung, trying to lighten up the mood.

"Getting a bit awkward, maybe.." said Jennie.

"Haha. I know. Anyway, straight to the point now. I stopped by your house today because during my trip this past 2 days I kept thinking about you," Taehyung confessed.

Jennie didn't really expect that. She's speechless.

"I'm not trying to court you, okay?" said Taehyung with his serious face. "I just want to know about my feelings towards you. Because honestly, even after all this years I can't seem to deny that you still look beautiful to me. And after hearing your story a while ago I realized that we're in the same boat, confused about our feelings towards another person --- Sana in my case --- and torn with the idea that we still somehow, at some point, maybe like each other."

"I-I don't know what to say, Taehyung..." said Jennie.

"You don't need to say anything," said Taehyung, feigning a smile. He turned to look down at his cup and continued, "I'm not saying that I already love you, I'm just saying that I like you. And that doesn't change the fact that I'm still not over Sana yet. I won't deny that. It's only been three months since we broke up."

"So, what's your point in telling me all of these now?"

"Point is, we liked each other before but we got separated. After few years of no connection, we met again on New Year's Eve. After two months, here we are having coffee. For some reasons we just keep bumping into each other. Don't you think we should give it a chance now?"

"What do you mean?"

"I really don't know what I'm saying," said Taehyung, scratching his nape. "I didn't mean it to sound like we should be together, okay? What I'm trying to say is can we make an effort to find out if this thing between us will lead to something in the future?"

"But how?"

"I... I don't know... Maybe we should hangout more often? Go on dates?"

"But how about Sana?"

Taehyung took a deep breath. "Like I told you, I haven't forgotten her completely yet. But I wanted to know if being with you can completely heal me. I think it's also an opportunity for you to find out what you're really feeling towards your guy."

"I honestly don't know. I'm really confused," said Jennie. "I just hope that no one will get hurt if this ends out badly."

"I don't think it would end out badly, though," said Taehyung, sipping his coffee. "It's either we realize that we're only fooling ourselves with each other or, who know, maybe we'll fall in love in the end."

Jennie chuckled. "Falling in love in the end? You think that's possible?"

"Maybe? Who knows, right? At least we will finally get the answers to our questions and dilemma after that."

The cold wind blew again reminding Jennie of the recent storm that hit a nearby country. She looked up the horizon and took a deep breath.

I just hope I'll get the answer soon.

Special

"Mom, I'm not sure if I still like him in the same way I did before, okay? May I remind you that it was like ten years ago?"

"I know, but at some point, you're still fond of him, right?"

Jennie stared at her mom for a long time while and breathed out uncertainty. She knows her mom is right. There's this part in her, no matter how little, that is still attracted to Taehyung. And she doesn't know if it will continue to shrink or --- who knows --- grow eventually.

"Just try going out with him for like a month and see if anything would spark between you two. If it doesn't then you tell him. I believe it's enough time for him to rethink his feelings too, right?"

"Mom ---"

"A month won't hurt you, Jennie. The least I could hope is for you to become good friends if this really won't work out. If after a month you'd realize that he's not the right guy, then fine. I'd stop bugging you."

Jennie knows that there's no way she could win this argument. "You promise?"

"Yes, just for a month. I just don't want you letting this chance pass by..."

Jennie is staring blankly at the ceiling, reflecting on what she and her mom talked about earlier. Her mom snooped on what happened after Taehyung dropped her home. Jennie told her everything, making her mom squeal with glee.

Just for a month? Urgh! Why am I not feeling right about it?

She is supposed to be happy too because this is what she wanted before --- to get his attention. And the fact that her mom has two thumbs up for him should be good news. But instead of being joyful with the turn of events, she's in a dilemma instead. No matter how much she tried to convince herself that she's morally better off with Taehyung, she can't set aside the fact that she's still feeling something for Lisa too.

The problem is she's not sure how serious her feelings are for Lisa. It's too underrated to call it a crush but is it that serious to call it love? How would she know if it really is love? And what would she do if it really is love? She can already imagine her mom objecting to it.

Jennie turned to her side and curled up against her body, hugging herself in anxiety. Sleep won't come to her yet. She was hoping that Lisa would call her just to confirm if she's arrived or what. She feels so lost right now that all she wanted is to hear Lisa's voice.

She glanced at her phone to check the time:

12:07 am

She buried her face in the pillow and sighed.

Please let me see you tomorrow, Lisa. Please.

Incheon International Airport

"Good evening. This is the pre-boarding announcement for flight 89B to Seoul. We are now inviting those passengers..."

Lisa let out a sigh of relieved after finally setting foot on the ground.

Phew! Home sweet home!

If she had know how much of an encumbrance that storm would be, she would not have gone to Indonesia in the first place. It was torture missing Jennie for a week, and what's making it worse is she can't even make a call

because the electricity was cut for days due to the wide damage the storm caused.

But her agony is over. She's finally home. Her enthusiasm is building up on the thought that Jennie has been missing her too. She couldn't believe it herself at first, but after their trip from Gampo, everything seemed to have changed between them. They grew in closer, in a more special way than friends could be. She knows it's too early to assume anything but she can't help raising her hopes up.

That's the reason she wanted to have that talk with Jennie, to clear things out. Although she's not hoping for that talk to happen right away, she has no plans on prolonging it either. She just needs more signs from Jennie before she pushes that talk to happen, and that's when she'll finally confess to her.

Having plans to call Jennie, Lisa checked the time on her phone:

12:07 am

Oh, I guess she's already sleeping.

She puffed her cheeks and blew air out. She pulled her bag straps over her shoulders as she walked towards the exit. There's an excitement that's quickly building up inside her on the thought that it'll be just a few hours from now before she goes to work.

I can't wait to see you, Jennie.

Monday -- 7:11 am

What the ---

Jennie purposely went to the office early that day with the objective of putting her chocolate present before Lisa arrives --- or before anyone arrives and sees her. It never occurred to her that she'd be competing with a pile of wrapped gifts, cards, letters, and some tiny stuffed toys.

She bit her lip and stared at the chocolate on her hands.

Tsk. Will she even like this? It's so simple.

"Hey, good morning," said a voice who's entering the room.

Jennie's stomach flipped and her heart began to race. She knows that voice well enough to make her panic. She turned around and immediately hid the chocolate behind her back.

"L-lisa?"

And then there she is, the person Jennie has been longing to see since last week, standing in front of her, having that smirk on her face with one hand holding tight to the strap of her bag.

"Hey, 'sup? What are you doing here this early?" said Lisa.

"I, uh, I just put my reports on Kai's table." Jennie lied.

Lisa glanced at her wristwatch. "At this hour? It's only seven quarter, Jen. Can't that wait until 8 am?"

"Ummm,"

"By any chance, were you checking if I'm already in?"

Jennie rolled her eyes in defense. "Why would I?"

Lisa made a quote sign with her fingers and mimicked Jennie's way of talking. "You have no idea how badly I'm missing you now, Lisa..."

That immediately brought Jennie to embarrassment. She covered her blushing face with a hand and grunted. "Urgh, I hate you, Lisa, I hate you."

Lisa laughed. "I missed you too, big time."

"Not funny..." Jennie glared, still blushing.

"Hey, why is the baby still grumpy?" asked Lisa, walking over to her. She patted Jennie on the head. "You're so cute, are you even aware of that?"

Jennie pursed her mouth in attempt to repress a smile that badly wants to break free. Seeing Lisa now in front of her want to throw herself for a hug. "You haven't called me."

"Ah, yeah. My phone was dead. Lights were out for days because of the storm."

"You should have at least called me when you arrived yesterday."

"Were you.. waiting for my call?"

Jennie gave a slight nod for an answer. "I was up until 1 am."

Suddenly all her stress from the travel and lack of sleep just vanished in a snap. Lisa's heart melted at the sight in front of her.

"Oh, I'm sorry. I arrived her past midnight. I thought you were already sleeping." said Lisa.

"Hmp..."

"Hey, don't be mad at me..." Lisa leaned over, searching for Jennie's eyes. Instead of answering, the latter stretched out her arms and showed a wrapped item in her hand. "What's this?" asked Lisa, pointing at it.

"For you."

Lisa took it hesitantly and stared at it. She didn't really expect to receive something like this now, especially from Jennie.

"If you don't like it, feel free to throw it somewhere else. I'm going back to my station now," said Jennie, starting to walk away.

"W-w-w-w-wait," said Lisa, grabbing Jennie by the arm. "Who said I don't like it?"

"Then why aren't you saying anything?" Jennie tried to yank off her arm, too shy to even look at Lisa.

"I'm just surprised, Jen, come on..." Lisa linked their hands together and squeezed it. "Don't go yet, honey..."

Knowing that Lisa won't see her face, Jennie smiled at the endearment. It's thrice sweeter hearing it in person. She finally stopped yanking and turned to Lisa, their hands still linked.

Lisa is observing the chocolate with a big smile on her face. "Did you make this? Is this the reason you came here early today, to surprise me?"

Jennie nodded. "But I don't think you'd like it. I guess you don't need that chocolate when you have these," she said, pointing at Lisa's table where the latter shifted her eyes at.

"Are you kidding me?" Lisa chuckled. She walked over to her station and dragged Jennie along with her. "There's no way these can beat this," she said, raising the chocolate. "This is the best Valentine's gift I received this year!"

"Hmp, you're just saying that just to make me feel good."

"Hey, I'm not kidding, okay? I love it. I promise. And thanks for this. It means a lot to me." Lisa put her bag down on the table and tried unzipping it with her free hand.

"It means a lot to me too. What are you doing?"

"I'm trying to put your chocolates in my bag so I could bring it home."

"You can let go of my hand so you can open it faster, you know."

"No, I don't want to." Lisa squeezed Jennie's hand harder. "What if you ran away?"

Jennie smiled secretly. "Ran away? Where would I go?"

"I don't know, maybe ran away with someone?"

Jennie suddenly felt something stuck in her throat. She knows it was just a joke but she can't help feeling a slight of guilt.

"Done!" Lisa exclaimed after successfully putting the chocolate inside her bag with one hand only. "By the way, have you had your breakfast yet?"

Jennie shook her head. "Want to grab a bite first?"

"Definitely. Come on now."

"Wait. Let me see your neck first."

"Huh?"

"Show me your neck," Jennie reiterated. Lisa, although hesitant, followed by unbuttoning her collar buttons. Jennie looked in closely and finally saw what she's looking for. "Okay, I thought you're not going to wear it."

"Ah, this?" Lisa pulled out the butterfly pendant. "You said you want us to wear it, right?"

"Yeah, that's why I'm checking, to make sure you obeyed."

"Ofcourse, how about yours?"

"You're not looking hard enough," said Jennie, pointing at her exposed necklace. "Make sure your fan girls won't see that, okay? I don't want to receive death threats anytime soon."

Lisa smiled. "Yes boss, yes."

"LISA!"

Jennie flinched in surprise when Suho stood up from his chair and screamed. She turned around and saw Lisa looking surprised as well. She

looked like she came from a quick trip from the pantry.

Lisa halted and put down her tumbler on top of Rosé's terminal. "Hey, Suho, how's it?"

Suho went over to hug her. "Lisa! Where have you been? I haven't seen you for a week!"

"Yeah, I know. I was trapped in Indonesia last week. I missed you guys."

"Lisaaaaaaa!" This time it was Somi who came over and hugged Lisa too. "I kept on asking Bam Bam why you were missing," she said, pouting, which shifted to a smile after a second. "Did you get my present on your table?"

"Yeah, I did. Thanks Somi," said Lisa, patting Somi's head. She turned to Rosé this time. "And you? No hugs for me?"

"I'm sorry, Lisa, you had your chance before. I'm already dating your best friend, so no..." Rosé said sassily. She laughed eventually and stood up. "Of course, I missed you. Come here and give your mommy a big hug."

"Mmmmm!" Lisa gave Rosé a tight squeeze. She pulled away and said, "Wow, it's just now that I realized how much I missed you all."

"Aren't you going to hug Jennie too?" asked Rosé.

Their eyes met for a second but Jennie turned her chair around, obviously feeling embarrassed with the question.

Knowing that it would stir some attention in the office and will raise some eyebrows from the fan girls, Lisa knows Jennie isn't planning on bragging about how special their friendship is.

It might be easy for others to tell that they are close but no one has any idea how deep it is now. And to be honest, Lisa's in the same boat too. She hasn't told Jisoo or Krystal about what's happening between her and Jennie lately, afraid that some jinx would ruin the rhythm.

"We already said hi to each other when I arrived her earlier," Lisa answered instead. "We even had breakfast together, right, Jen?"

Jennie hummed to agree. "Lisa went in a little later after I arrived."

"Hmm.. are you sure you guys didn't plan on having a breakfast together ahead?" Rosé asked them; probably still pulling out the string she had pulled before about noticing the closeness of the two.

"No," Lisa and Jennie said in unison. "We just came in both early," Lisa continued, which Jennie had agreed on right away.

"Okay, if you say so," said Rosé. "Oh! Lisa, have you seen Mr. Lee yet?"

"Mr. Lee?" asked Lisa, pretending not to know. Somi showed the 'male' alien to her and she hugged it right away. "Aww, this one is so cute!"

"Last week, someone sent that on Jennie on Valentine's Day. Isn't that sweet?" said Rosé, giggling.

"Ah, yeah? A secret admirer?" Lisa glanced quickly at Jennie who's already smiling at the acting.

"And speaking of that, have you already found out the persona of the sender, Jen?" asked Suho. "I really want to see the guy."

"Y-yeah," said Jennie hesitantly. "I received a call that afternoon. It turned out that it was a special friend of mine."

A smile slipped across Lisa's face.

"Special friend?" Suho got excited. "You haven't mentioned him to us, hmmm."

"It's because there's nothing to tell yet," Jennie answered.

"When will we meet him then?" asked Rosé.

"Huh? Why would you want to meet him?"

"We want to know the face behind this alien," said Suho, picking the alien from Lisa. "Don't you think I can see from my station how much you're giving this toy a special treatment?"

Lisa got curious. "Special treatment, like what?"

Jennie facepalmed herself. *Oh my gosh, Lisa. Why are you even asking that?*

"Like bringing the toy literally anywhere she goes?" Suho answered. "I bet if she could bring it in the restroom she would too."

"Urgh, Suho, stop that already," Jennie grunted, embarrassed.

"Oh, and mind you," Rosé interrupted this time, "she's always hugging that you when she comes in and before she leaves. And it's on her lap during the entire working day."

"Rosé!" Jennie yowled.

"What?"

"It's embarrassing."

"Why would you be embarrassed, it's not like your special friend can hear you, right?"

Jennie grunted again and covered her face with her palms.

Suho nudged Lisa. "You see that? No one has made Jennie blush like that before. That guy must be really special."

Lisa couldn't take the smile off her face seeing how Jennie is blushing now. "Well, I believe that she surely is special to *him* too."

Their eyes met for a second before Jennie turns back to face her computer. When she's sure no one would see her, Jennie broke into a full smile.

Lunch

Wednesday

Lisa has been busy with tennis stuff these past few days. She has to attend practice every after office because there is an upcoming internal club competition in two weeks. Fortunately for her, Jennie is also busy doing some errands for her mom. They've mutually agreed to postpone their talk next month.

It was after a tennis practice one day when Lisa's friend, Wendy, approached her. "You done there, buddy?"

"Yup, almost," said Lisa, putting the racket inside her bag.

"Why don't we grab some ice cold coffee first before we head home?"

Lisa checked her watch. "I say why don't we get a dinner instead? It's past 7 o'clock."

Before she could answer, Wendy turn her attention to the footsteps coming her way. "Hey," she said to the approaching person.

The girl wrapped her arms around Wendy. "What's taking you so long? Don't tell me you two are still putting on make-up?"

Wendy and Lisa laughed at that. "Wendy is still busy trying to look pretty for you, Joy," said Lisa.

Joy turned to her girlfriend and pouted her lips. "Awww, but honestly darling, you're better off handsome than pretty."

Wendy laughed again. "And who says I'd like to wear makeup? It feels so itchy," she said grimacing.

Joy buried her face on Wendy's neck and mumbled. "I'm hungry now, Wends."

Wendy sighed and rubbed Joy's back. She turned to Lisa. "You're right, we really should get some dinner or else this baby will turn into Chucky later on."

"Wendy!" Joy exclaimed, slapping her girlfriend's arm.

They went to the nearest mall restaurant in the area and ordered some Chinese foods.

"So, how are you guys with the practice?" asked Joy.

"Good. I think I got the best teammate here," said Wendy.

Lisa elbowed Wendy. "You're too humble. She's way a lot better than me, Joy."

Joy just giggled at that. The lovers were still teasing each other when a passerby couple caught Lisa's attention. It was just a simple glance but she had to take a second look because there's something about the girl that made her curious. That's when she realized who the girl is.

What the ---

She could not be mistaken. It is Jennie walking along with a tall guy.

Although they could be mistaken for a couple, the two were just plainly talking while walking. Lisa observed the two until they disappear from her sight. She felt relieved that Jennie didn't do anything physical like clinging to him or what. They were not even sweet and Jennie's hands were glued to the strap of her bag.

Could be her friend?

Lisa creased her forehead in anxiety. For a second there she suddenly felt insecure, worried that there is a possibility that someone will take away Jennie soon.

The next day, everything was normal. Jennie was in her sweet mode towards Lisa the entire day. Lisa didn't bother to mention what she saw yesterday because she doesn't want to sound like a jealous girlfriend.

We're still the same. It was just probably a friend.

It was Friday noon when Jennie, Rosé and Suho decided to go out for lunch. The guard approached them when they were about to head to the lift.

"Oh, you're here, Ms. Jennie. I tried calling your extension just now but you're no longer answering."

"I'm going out for lunch. Why?"

"A visitor of yours just came in," said the guard, pointing at the waiting area.

Jennie cocked her head aside to peek and flinched at the sight of Taehyung sitting on the couch.

Oh my gosh! What is he doing here?

She can't explain why but she's not comfortable with the idea of him being in the office. One of the reasons is because her friends, who are all waiting for her to have a boyfriend, will surely tease her relentlessly. And another reason, unconsciously the main reason for her, is Lisa. Although nothing romantic has been officially declared between them yet she still doesn't want to give Lisa the wrong idea about Taehyung.

"What's the matter?" asked Rosé, noticing her friend's turmoil. She followed Jennie's line of sight and saw a slender guy already approaching them.

"Hey..." he said.

"Oh my gosh, a hottie." Suho whispered.

"T-taehyung, it's a surprise to see you here," said Jennie.

"Sorry for coming here unannounced. I had a meeting just around the corner and thought of inviting you out for lunch."

"No worries. We were just about to go out anyway," said Jennie. She felt Rosé nudged her secretly. "Oh, by the way, these are my colleagues, Rosé and Suho. Guys, this is Taehyung, my friend."

"Ahhh, it's a pleasure to meet you, Taehyung," said Rosé, stretching out her hand for a shake.

"We're all delighted to see you..." Suho had a wide smile on his face.

"Pleasures all mine." Taehyung politely shook their hands.

Wanting to exit the area right away, Jennie turned to Rosé and Suho. "So, um, I guess I can't join you guys for lunch. I'll see you guys later then."

"Why don't we go all together?" asked Taehyung. "It'll be unkind for me to steal you away from your friends when you guys had already planned something."

"Yeah, we should go altogether, the more the merrier, right?" Rosé agreed right away. "Don't worry, we won't disturb you."

Jennie shot Rosé a death glare before turning to Taehyung. "Are you sure you're comfortable with that?"

"Yeah, don't worry. As long as your friends don't bite then I don't mind."

Suho laughed and playfully hit Taehyung's arm. "I like your sense of humor."

Jennie mentally facepalmed herself, already regretting that she told Taehyung where she's working. She looked around the area to make sure that a certain individual isn't passing by at the moment. When she confirmed that the coast is clear she strode towards the elevator.

"Okay, let's go." Jennie repeatedly pushed the elevator button. She needs to escape the area ASAP because it is where all the employees are passing by during lunch.

20....

19....

C'mon.. c'mon.. c'mon.. hurry up...

18...

Ding!

The lift opened on their floor and Jennie hurried inside, making sure to stand beside the control panel so she could close the door right away. She was glad that everyone got in immediately.

"Hold it! Hold it!" somebody shouted.

Jennie's eyes widened when she saw Somi trying to catch up with them. Before the interns gets in, she turned to her left and shouted at somebody. "Hey, you two hurry up. Let's catch this elevator down."

Oh. My. Gosh.

Jennie felt cascades of ice cold water being poured over her when Lisa and Bam followed Somi in. The elevator door closed after.

Jennie massaged her temples, attempting to calm herself down. The thought of Lisa standing beside her and Taehyung at her back is giving her headache.

"LISA!" Suho exclaimed, hugging Lisa from behind. "I thought you guys are staying in the pantry?"

"Somi changed her mind for the 5th time and decided to go down instead," said Lisa. She then turned her head aside and noticed Jennie. "Oh, hey."

"Hey."

"You should join us too, Lisa," said Suho. "Oh, by the way, have you met Jennie's friend?"

Lisa turned to look at the guy beside Jennie and noticed the same guy she saw the other day.

"Taehyung.." he said, stretching out his hand.

Lisa shook his hand firmly. "Lisa."

Jennie closed her eyes and slump her head against the wall. Without her knowledge, excited Rosé already informed Somi about Taehyung.

Ding!

"Hi, I'm Somi, and this is Bam." Somi enthusiastically introduced herself after they get out of the elevator. Taehyung shook their hands too. "Can we join you guys for lunch?" she asked, obviously wanting to snoop around.

"We'd love to, Somi." Rosé answered after Somi acted according to what they've just planned.

Jennie brought her hand up to massage her temples again.

Ugh. What could be worse?

"Are you okay?"

Jennie looked up and met Taehyung's concerned eyes. "Yeah, just a little stress at work I guess."

Taehyung patted her head. "You should stop being workaholic for once."

"Yeah, maybe I should take a break," she responded, feigning a smile. Her eyes wandered to search for a particular person, finding *her* already looking at them.

Lisa had a dull look in her eyes. She slowly turned around and walked ahead after their eye contact.

Jennie let out a loud sigh before she resumes walking.

I've got a bad feeling about this.

I've got a bad feeling about this.

Lisa pulled out her phone from her pocket and pretends to be busy looking at it. Of all the places she could dump her lazy butt on, she ended up sitting in front of Jennie and her friend. It's the only available chair she saw after everyone had settled in.

Although the two weren't sweet, like lovey-dovey sweet, Lisa knew that there is something already going on, and it bothers her big time. Jennie is obviously bashful around the dude while he looks at her like she's a delicate flower.

Ugh. What an eyesore.

An unpleasant feeling is starting to spread through her chest and Lisa doesn't have any idea how to handle it. Is it okay for her to act jealous even though they aren't officially together? And she can't blame Jennie for entertaining this dude because technically she's still single, right?

But what brings Lisa to confusion is what Jennie had shown her these past few days. What was all that sweetness for? Is there really something going on between them or was it all just in her mind?

"This is a cozy place," said Taehyung, looking around the area.

"Is this your first time here?" asked Jennie.

"Yeah. If it weren't for today's meeting I wouldn't be able to explore this part of Seoul."

"You were never really the explorer, huh?"

"Told ya, I'm a house bum."

Lisa scoffed to herself, still pretending to do something on her phone.

Pfft. What a boring dude. Jennie needs to be with someone who can show her the world and not someone who's contended with the four walls of his house.

"I'm glad that we brought you here," said Jennie. "The food here tastes great, right, Lisa?"

Lisa was unprepared for the sudden inquiry. "Uh, yeah.." she simply said, going back to her phone and browsing the calendar this time.

"You seem silent, something wrong?" asked Rosé, leaning in closer to look at what Lisa is doing.

"Uh, no. I'm just busy."

"Busy looking at your calendar?"

"I-I'm reorganizing my schedule."

"I see. Managing your time to be spent with your girlfriends, huh?" Rosé sniggered.

"Haha, you're funny, Rosé, haha." Lisa hoped that her laughter sounded natural.

"No, I'm not kidding. Jisoo told me that you're an expert Playgirl." said Rosé, elbowing Lisa.

"What? And you believe her? Come on, you should know by now that Jisoo was just kidding you..." said Lisa.

Rosé raised her skeptical eyebrows. "Oh, really? Well, she told me that you weren't really trapped in Indonesia, you just met a hot girl in Bali that doesn't want to let go of you yet."

"WHAT?!" Lisa gaped at Rosé. She put down her phone on the table and pretends to laugh. "Haha, that Jisoo surely is good at playing pranks on me, hah."

Shit. I'm going to punch a bar owner in the nose later!

Rosé browsed something on her phone and showed them a picture. "Honestly I did not believe her at first until she showed me this..."

Lisa's jaw dropped when she saw a picture of herself with a girl whose arms were trailed around her waist. Jennie borrowed Rosé's phone to look at it too.

Shit! I'm seriously going to slaughter a friend now!

"I didn't know you have this side of you," said Rosé, not having any idea that the girl in the picture is Jisoo's ex-girlfriend whom Lisa met in Bali. Lisa sent that picture just to tease Jisoo.

"The first time I saw you earlier I already knew that you were a chic magnet," said Taehyung, trying to blend along.

"Nah, it's not like that, dude. That girl is a friend I met there."

Shit. Did I just call him dude?

"Yeah, we *believe* you, don't worry," said Taehyung, chuckling.

Lisa felt a kick under the table, making her look at Jennie who's aiming death glares at her now.

Your battery was dead for days, huh? Jennie made a face.

As if getting what Jennie was thinking, Lisa shook her head in denial and made a face in response. *I'm not lying!*

Jennie rolled her eyes and turned to Taehyung this time. "Hey, would you like to have dinner at MY PLACE later?"

Lisa's eyes twitched at that.

"Sounds good. I missed your mom's cooking already," said Taehyung, casually leaning his arm on Jennie's chair backrest.

Lisa gritted her teeth.

Jennie playfully hit his arm. "Hey, you just had dinner with us the other night, remember?"

"Still it feels like decades ago."

Lisa rolled her eyes and scoffed.

Taehyung checked his watch and say, "My meeting is until 5:30 pm. I guess I'll pick you up after work?"

Lisa slowly grabs her phone, already thinking of canceling her practice with Wendy later.

"Sure. I'll wait for you then."

Lisa closed her eyes, feeling her day has already been ruined.

♪ Feels like I'm walking on tightrope, my heart is in my throat, I'm counting on high hopes to get me over you ♪

Lisa was rubbing her eyes in disappointment when her phone rang, making her almost jump in surprise. The ringtone was too loud making everybody at the table look at her.

"Sorry," she said. A smile drew across her face when she saw the caller's name. "I gotta take this first, excuse me."

Jennie watched Lisa stood up and walked outside. A pang of curiosity hit her when she saw that picture of Lisa and Krystal again flashing on the phone screen.

Her eyebrows furrowed as she watched Lisa outside laughing while talking on the phone.

"Tell me, do you have a magic or something? You always call just in the nick of time," said Lisa.

"I don't know what you're talking about. I just had a costumer here who was in Indonesia last week. Then I remember that a certain someone had totally forgotten to call me," said Krystal.

Although she doesn't feel that cheery Lisa laughed at that. "Sorry, I've been busy."

"Busy with her?"

Lisa just smiled at it, suddenly feeling a light pinch on her chest. "So, what's up?"

"Still drowned in flowers. You?"

Lisa peeked inside and saw Jennie laughing with her friend. "Doing fine.. I guess..."

"What's with the sigh? Are you not with Jennie?"

"We're out for a lunch but something came up."

"Something like?"

"H-her friend joined us."

"A friend? I assume it's a 'he' based on the timber of your voice."

"Y-yeah..."

"So, what's the matter, are they sweet or what?"

Lisa turned to peek inside again and saw all of them laughing with him.

"Not really sweet, but you know, I can feel that there is something going on."

"Ooooh, Lisa is a jealous monkey."

Lisa shoved her free hand into her pocket and turned away from the eyesore. "Don't I have the right to?"

"Jealousy isn't something you can just dodge, Lisa. It's normal to feel it once in a while."

"But what should I do?"

"Is there anything you still can do?"

"What do you mean?"

"You said something is going on between them, right? Do you think Jennie likes him?"

Lisa felt her heart being pulled down from her chest. Based on what she heard and from what she saw the other day, the two might have been going out for quite a while now.

"Honestly, I think she does."

"Oh, that's a blow..."

Lisa sighed. She brought a hand to her heart. "Yeah, I know. Quite a hard blow actually."

"I always thought that she has something for you, really. But maybe I was wrong. At least the sooner this happens that sooner you can accept it, right?"

"Yeah... But there's something bothering me, Krys."

"What is it?"

"Before this guy came into the picture, or before I was even aware of his existence, Jennie's actions towards me had changed. She's making me feel special, like --- I don't know if it's just me --- but she's making me feel that she likes me too."

"Really? When did this start to happen?"

Tok... Tok... Tok...

A knock on the window interrupted Lisa's thoughts. She saw Bam signaling that their food has been served. She gave him a nod.

"Uh, I have to go, Krys. Our food is ready. I'll drop by your shop later, okay?"

"Sure. I'd prepare dinner for us. Or would you prefer a drinking session instead?"

Lisa laughed. "We'll see. Thanks for the call, I'll see you later."

Lisa didn't enjoy her lunch at all. Aside from Somi and Rosé teasing her about her recent call with Krystal, she can't stand the sight in front of her. She feels irritated seeing those two talking low, almost whispering things to each other from time to time like they were having their own little world.

And what's bringing Lisa to misery is the idea that Jennie obviously likes him. It'll just be a matter of time before Jennie announces that she finally had chosen a boyfriend. Lisa would be lying to herself if she'd say that the two don't look good together. Although they aren't sweet yet, it is obvious that they have good chemistry, and it torments her more.

On the other hand, she also started questioning herself on what could be Jennie's motive in showing her all the sweetness before. It confuses her

because she knows that those affection were real. But what happened? Why is this guy here now? Was it just a momentary fling where Jennie woke up one day and realized that she wants to be with a guy instead?

The pit that she had during lunch got deeper eventually. Lisa and Jennie didn't get the chance to talk to each other after that. It's not like they were avoiding each other, but nobody initiated a move to talk about it first.

Truth is she's trying her best to act cool about it and at the same time trying to stay away from Jennie for now. That lunch alone had ruined her day. Hearing more stories about him isn't something she needed now.

By the end of the day, as Lisa was passing by their office, she saw a black car picking up Jennie in front of the building.

Ugh. Damnit!

Her knuckles were white as she clenched the steering wheel with both hands, frustrated by the idea that maybe Jennie doesn't really like to be with someone like her. And what's damaging her pride more is the fact that she hates and envies Jennie's friend at the same time. In a fair competition she knows she has a chance, but if gender is the real issue then it's going to be a mismatch.

And here I was thinking that I had a chance. As if I had a chance in the first place. Stupid me.

"I think I know what's happening here," said Krystal after hearing the story. Lisa narrated everything that had happened after Gampo. "I don't want to give you false hope but I still stand by my statement that Jennie likes you."

"I wanted to believe that too, Krys. I mean, I once believed that, but look at what's happening now." Lisa ran her fingers through her hair and sighed. "Is she just playing on me?"

"I don't think that's her intention, Lisa. Maybe she's just.. confused..."

"Confused about her feelings for me?"

"Could be." Krystal shrugged. "She could also be confused about her feelings for the guy, or confused about telling her mom about you, or maybe.. confused about your feelings for her?"

"Confused about my feelings for her? I'm sure she knows how special she is to me, Krys."

"Maybe. But I'm sure that's what you're thinking with Irene too before, right? That she knows what exactly she meant to you?"

"What do you mean?"

"Apparently, based on the stories you told me, all the time that you were thinking that everything was cool, that you and Irene were okay, she was already thinking that you weren't serious about her, remember?" asked Krystal.

Lisa was speechless.

"I don't know if this is the right time to confront Jennie about this," said Krystal, raising her feet on her chair, "but I've heard this story before, Lisa; you and Irene, now it's you and Jennie. Don't you think what's happening is just a cliché?"

Lisa slumped back against the backrest of the couch, realizing how their situation right now is somewhat similar to what she had with Irene before: a blurred relationship that led to an unclear ending.

Hearing no response from her friend, Krystal continued. "You need to act on this one. I'm not saying that this is the best solution to your problem, but you should do it for yourself. If Jennie will choose him, then so be it. At least you guys made it clear and that will set you free."

Lisa is now realizing that maybe Irene wouldn't have left her in the first place if everything was clear before between them. But if she'll clarify things now will that make Jennie pick her instead of him?

"You think that's my only way out?" asked Lisa.

Krystal nodded. "You don't want to commit the same mistake as before, would you?"

Cannot

Lisa is staring at the chocolate Jennie gave her last Monday.

I remember telling her about Japanese and Korean tradition during Valentine's Day. So, what was she implying when she gave me this?

She ran her hands over her scalp as she plops down her bed. It's Friday night and the plan of taking Jennie out was ruined because the latter had invited a friend to have dinner at her place. The idea of Jennie being alone with him at the moment is killing Lisa.

Uuuugh. I'm such an idiot for even thinking that they were only friends!

She knew it, the moment she saw them walking the other day, that there was something different about them. She just never thought that she'll get all the answer sooner.

But the conversation she had with Krystal earlier somehow gave her temporary peace. Krystal has a point, and Lisa knows herself that she felt it too. Jennie has something for her and Lisa needs to find out how big or small that something is.

Should I really talk to her now about it?

The weekend passed and the two still haven't talk to each other yet. No one made an attempt to do the first move. And Lisa, who thought she'll be better this time, was tortured even more. It went worse because Taehyung started to drive Jennie every morning and picks her up every afternoon.

Lisa's just faking a smile whenever Suho and Rosé talk about Jennie's love life. Those two are so excited for their friend. There are days when Lisa sees Jennie's empty chair and Rosé will just tell her that Jennie and Taehyung went out for lunch or he picked her up early.

Not wanting to hear more about it, Lisa tried to stay away from that team and busied herself in tennis instead. She put all her efforts in every practice in hopes of somehow forgetting her drama for a while. There's no point lingering on it anyway because she'll suffer more. Beside, she's got a competition to worry about and that's where she should focus now.

Friday --- 6:17 pm

It was after a week of avoidance when Lisa and Jennie ran into each other in the hallway. Lisa is about to go home that time and Jennie is walking back to her station from the restroom.

Both stopped walking abruptly at the sight of each other.

Lisa isn't sure what to do, to ignore or say hi. There are only a few people left in the office that time, a reason why Lisa can't just simply say she didn't notice Jennie.

It was Jennie who smiled first. "Hey."

Lisa pulls the strap of her bag over her shoulder, trying her best not to melt. "Sup?"

"Good. You?"

"Likewise." Lisa turned her attention to Jennie's table saw the PC still turned on. "Overtime?"

"Yeah. Got deadlines to meet. You were on OT too?"

"Yeah, just finished wrapping things up."

Then there was silence.

Lisa is staring at Jennie now and all she can think of is how much she missed this girl.

"Uh.. so.. you're going home now or tennis practice?" asked Jennie.

"Home. No tennis today. You?"

"Just finalizing few more things."

"Umm, would you.. do.. do you have a ride home..?" asked Lisa, her palms starting to sweat.

Jennie fiddled her fingers and stood there looking down. "Umm, he's going to pick me up in a while..."

"Oh, um.. yeah.. um.. so... I better go ahead now..." said Lisa, scratching her head.

Shit! Stupid! Why did I even ask that! Ugh!

Lisa is somehow expecting that Jennie would say something, maybe stop her if what, but the latter didn't. Instead, Jennie moved aside to give way.

"Bye," said Lisa, walking away from that area.

"Uh, Lisa?"

Lisa closed her eyes first, realizing how much she missed hearing Jennie call her name. She turned around. "Yes?"

"W-we're cool, right?"

"Y-yeah.. why..?"

"I don't know. It just feels like something's off lately," said Jennie, bringing her hand to her necklace.

"Off with what?" asked Lisa, pretending to have no any idea.

"With us?"

Lisa scoffed to herself at Jennie's usage of "us".

"Were you avoiding me?" asked Jennie.

Lisa cleared her throat. "No. W-why would I avoid you?"

"I don't know. It just feels like you've been far away this past few days..."

"I was just busy with tennis stuff and you're busy too, right?"

"Right."

"Nothing to worry about, okay?" said Lisa, pulling the strap of her bag over her shoulders, ready to turn away. "I really have to go now."

I don't even want to see him pick you up here.

"Do you have a spare time for a quick coffee?" asked Jennie, making Lisa halt.

Lisa put a hand to her waist as she turns back.

What do you want, Jennie? Why are you doing this to me?

She took a deep breath and stared at Jennie back for a long while before she nods.

They went to the small coffee shop down the office and sat across each other.

"So what's up?" Lisa asked after sipping from her coffee.

Jennie narrowed her eyes and stared at Lisa. "I'm just curious, by any chance, are you mad at me?"

"Why would I be mad at you?"

Jennie shrugged, still waiting for Lisa to give her answer.

"I'm not. I told you we're cool, right?" Lisa lied, still trying to pretend that she's not affected at all. However, there was a look on Jennie that she cannot decipher. Is she worried? Is she troubled?

"Then why are you not wearing your necklace?" came Jennie's response.

Lisa scratched the tip of her eyebrow after realizing that she's wearing a v-neck shirt, exposing her clear neck and collarbone.

After what happened last week she never wore that necklace again. It just reminds her of the false pretense she has built her hopes up for.

"I-I just left it in my locker yesterday after the practice," said Lisa.

"Left it? You have not been wearing it for a week now, Lisa." said Jennie in a matter-of-fact tone.

Lisa groaned inside. "And your point?"

"I just want to know if there's something wrong with us."

Lisa smiled at Jennie's usage of "us" again. "No, we're fine."

"We're fine? But why am I feeling that there is something going on?"

Lisa took a deep breath and looked away. "Maybe you're just over thinking."

Jennie leaned back having a disappointed look on her face. She eventually eyed her cup and touched it with her fingertip.

"Maybe I am. I guess you're through with me being your past time, huh?" whispered Jennie.

"Past time? No, Jennie. You got it completely wrong..."

"Then what's wrong? Why do I have the feeling that despite being physically close now we're seemingly world's apart?"

Lisa stared at Jennie directly, mouth ajar. She knew that the more she avoids this confrontation the longer her misery will be. Maybe it's time to let it all out now. Maybe it's time she finds out what she really means to Jennie.

"You really wanna hear the truth?" Lisa breathed out.

Jennie immediately reached out for Lisa's hand. "What's bothering you, tell me."

Lisa's eyes landed on their hands first before she turned to look at Jennie. "You."

Jennie's eyes widened. After having a hard time to think of what to say, she looked down and slowly pulled her hand away.

"I know that you know that something special is going on between us, right?" asked Lisa, pushing it further. "Tell me, what am I to you?"

"A friend..." said Jennie, her eyes darting tensely around the room.

"A friend," said Lisa calmly, tapping her fingers on the table. "So, does that mean that I misunderstood everything you've showed me?"

"It's.. it's not like that, Lisa..."

"Or were you just playing on me, pretending that I am special?"

"No. I'm not that kind of person. I would never do that to you..."

"So what do I really mean to you?"

Jennie pinched her nose and sighed. "Lisa...."

"Just help me understand the meaning of your actions. How should I interpret your affection towards me? Is it the same sweetness you're showing him now?"

It was obvious from her looks that Jennie was having a struggle. "I can't, Lisa. I.. can't..."

"What do you mean you can't? Do you have feelings for me?" Lisa finally asked it straight.

"I don't know. I'm confused, okay?" said Jennie, bringing her palms to her face. "And it doesn't matter even if I do because I still cannot be with you!"

That was a hard blow. Lisa had to lean back on her chair to be able to contain it. Krystal was right about the confusion. Maybe Jennie is really struggling inside. However, it is evident now that whatever or whoever caused her confusion there's no way she's going to pick Lisa in the end.

"I get it. Don't worry." said Lisa, making invisible patterns on the table. This battle is already lost right even before it started. Jennie never wanted to fight alongside her in the first place.

"I-I'm sorry, Lisa..."

Lisa shook her head. "No, don't be. At least I know now where I stand. No more expectations this time."

Out of the blue, Jennie's phone beeped. She checked her message and replied on it.

"You like him, right?" asked Lisa, knowing whom the message came from.

"Lisa.. please..."

"I'm sorry, I won't intrude again." Lisa raised her hands up.

Jennie wanted to say something but her phone beeped again. She read the text message and looked up at Lisa.

"I'm sorry.. my ride's here. I have to go," said Jennie, standing up.

Lisa nodded in approval. "Enjoy your weekend, Jennie."

"You too." said Jennie before walking out.

Lisa took another sigh when she saw a black car stopping in front of the entrance. Jennie glanced at her before going inside. Lisa watched the black car drove away.

"Fuck."

Lisa lightly banged her fist against the table. She covered her face with her palms, struggling to stay in one piece. She pulled out her phone from her pocket and dialed a number.

Brr.. brr.. brr..

"Hello?"

"Dude, where you at?"

"I just drove Rosé home. I'm going to the bar. Why?"

"Is there anything you would recommend drinking tonight?"

"Something wrong, dude?"

"Jennie and I had a quick talk just now."

"And then?"

"It's over, dude."

"Oh, boy."

Prrrt!

The referee's whistle echoed in the area signaling the start of the new set. The opponent will be doing the service this time as Wendy and Lisa wait for the ball.

"Are you okay?" asked Wendy.

"Yeah. I'm just a bit dizzy but I'm fine," said Lisa.

Truth is she totally regret drinking last night because it's affecting her focus right now. Lisa was not contented being drunk last Friday, after telling Jisoo what happened, so she went to the bar again last night and tried to enjoy herself like the way she used to.

She met a couple of acquaintances and partied like there's no tomorrow. She woke up this morning on Jisoo's couch having a terrible hangover. Of course, she never told Wendy about the real reason for her headache.

"You sure you still can play?"

"Don't worry about me, I got this. Oh, there they are!"

Tok!

Wendy returned the ball with a forehand.

Tok!

The ball is bouncing back to them. Lisa runs on the baseline and caught the ball.

Shit. I almost tripped on that one!

Although she enjoyed partying last night, she still can't erase the heavy feeling in her chest whenever she's alone.

Is she feeling the same way like me now?

Tok!

The ball is rolling back to them. This time it was Wendy who caught it.

What am I thinking? She's probably enjoying the weekend with him.

Tok!

Shit. My headache's attacking again.

Lisa is having a hard time following the ball with her eyes. The place is slightly spinning around her. Good thing she successfully returned the ball with a backhand.

Tok!

She doesn't know which is hurting more; is it her head or her feelings? Somehow the unpleasant feeling is still lurking inside her. It never went away. Not even once.

This time the ball was sent back to them at a speed that they didn't expect. Lisa runs to catch it. She moved sideways in a swift, twisting her ankles until she felt that something is already aching. Even so, she pushed it.

Shit.

Prrrt!

I'll update one more chapter because I can't update tomorrow. Enjoy! ☹️☹️
☹️

Offline

Monday --- 8:07 am

Jennie sat back at her table after getting coffee from the pantry. She immediately opened their company IM to check if a certain person is already in. To her dismay she found this:

Lalisa Manoban is offline.

Her eyebrows furrowed.

Hmm? Late for work?

It has become her habit to check on Lisa by looking at her IM status every day. And without her complete awareness, she's not just doing it every morning but she's doing it like every hour of the entire shift.

She checked her phone to see if there were messages, apparently none.

Where could she be? Don't tell me she's absent? Or maybe she'll work half day? Should I call her? But what if she'll ignore me?

The status didn't change the entire day, making Jennie feel weary. If it wasn't for the thought that Kai would find it weird for her to ask about Lisa she might have already asked him. In fact, she was so close to doing that.

She glanced at Mr. Lee and stretched out her hand to pet it.

Aish. Where are you, Lisa?

"Something bothering you?"

Taehyung's voice had broken Jennie's reverie. She turned to him with a confused face, barely heard what he said.

"Are you alright? You're spacing out again..." he asked.

Jennie propped her elbows against the car door and gazed out the window. "I'm just thinking of something."

"Penny for your thoughts?"

She leaned her head against her hand and turned to him. "Mmm, it's mostly about work," she lied. She was actually thinking where on earth could Lisa be and why on earth she didn't go to work today.

"Work?" Taehyung didn't sound convinced. "That work has certainly been bothering you for days now, huh?"

Jennie raised a confused eyebrow.

As if getting what Jennie was thinking, Taehyung continued, "You were not yourself over the weekend --- oh, no, let me rephrase that --- you were not yourself since I picked you up from work last Friday. Something wrong?"

Knowing that he's right, Jennie lifted her head from her hand and turned back to the window. That Friday conversation had surely disturbed her entire weekend to the point that she didn't enjoy whatever they did. Everything was boring for her. Everything was lifeless.

As much as she wanted to stay and talk to Lisa that night, she can't. Taehyung needs to pick her up and they were supposed to have dinner with her mom somewhere in the city. And as much as she wanted to tell Lisa the truth that night, she just can't. She was not prepared for that kind of talk yet, somehow it scared her.

All the troubles from the past few days sunk into her that night; her mom, Taehyung, Lisa --- she just can't sort them out yet. In the end, she knows she said things that she didn't mean. She avoided the questions. But she

never thought that running away that night would hurt her the way she's hurting now.

During the interrogation, questions started popping out of her head: are her harbored feelings for Lisa enough reason to be in a relationship with her? And how serious is Lisa about this too? Will it be worth it to risk everything now to be with her?

While Lisa was cornering her with questions, Jennie felt the need to escape because she doesn't want to make impulsive decisions that she'll regret in the end.

And now she's hella worried about Lisa's whereabouts. After what happened last Friday all she wanted is to talk to her, at least explain to her the reasons for her confusion. She wants to let Lisa know that no matter how confused she is, one thing is certain, it is Lisa whom she wants to be by her side by the end of each day.

"I'm just probably stressed," Jennie uttered instead, feeling compelled to say something.

"I'm all ears, you know, just in case you need someone to talk to."

Jennie turned to look at him, contemplating if she should tell him about it. She hesitated the last minute and just gave him a feigned smile.

"Home sweet home." Taehyung pulled the car over in front of Jennie's house. He turned his attention to his passenger and noticed how she was struggling to unlock her seatbelt. "Let me help you with that," he said, leaning over.

Instead of slanting her body away, Jennie didn't move to look at the boy she once liked so much. She stared at him as if expecting something would happen to her.

I should be feeling something now, right?

"There," said Taehyung, raising his head and meeting Jennie's eyes, realizing the close proximity of their faces.

Jennie was pushing herself to the limit. She didn't look away and stared back at him for long until Taehyung took it as a sign. He propped his arm against her chair and slowly leaned closer to her.

It was when he closed his eyes when Jennie realized that what she's doing is insane.

"Taehyung.." she gasped, tilting her head down, making him halt halfway with confused eyes. "I-I'm sorry... I... I can't do it..."

Taehyung pursed his lips, realizing what he just attempted to do. "No.. um... I'm the one who should be sorry.." he said leaning back. "I... I shouldn't have done that."

Knowing that she was partially at fault, Jennie bit her lower lip and looked down at her hands.

"Please tell me you're not going to avoid me after this.." said Taehyung.

Jennie looked up at him. "No, I won't. It's just that... I'm still not sure of what I'm doing now..."

Relieved, Taehyung patted her head. "You're not alone in this, Jen. Remember, we're still both trying to figure things out."

Jennie nodded. "I just don't want to rush into things..."

"Yeah, me too." Taehyung smiled. "Decisions about feelings should be thought carefully because one simple wrong choice could mean letting go of the right one."

Despite not really feeling good, Jennie was able to make out a small smile in response.

"Just remember that I'm here whenever you need someone to talk to, especially the things you can't tell your mom, okay?"

Jennie felt a weight lifted from her chest. At least if it won't work out with Taehyung she knows she's found a good friend in him.

"Thank you, Tae."

It just doesn't felt the same.

Jennie is lost in deep thoughts again while staring at her ceiling. She was expecting that there would be at least an effect on her; heartbeat rising, butterflies in the stomach, over consciousness, anything similar to what she feels when Lisa is in the same proximity like that, but there was none. She felt nothing.

Taehyung doesn't have the power to possess her, possess her in the way that Lisa does just by looking straight in her eyes or just by showing her smirk.

Jennie checked her phone hoping to see a message from Lisa. She knows she could just message or call her but she doesn't have the guts to do it after what happened last week. At some point, she was expecting that Lisa will find a way to talk to her again and she'll explain what exactly she is going through.

She threw her phone somewhere on the bed after seeing that there were no messages. She curled up against her body and buried her face in the pillow.

Tuesday

Lalisa Manoban is offline.

Jennie shoulders slumped and her face sulked when she saw the same status like yesterday. She turned her head at graphics department's direction and sighed.

5:03 pm

"I'll go ahead, Jen," said Rosé, leaning down to cheek kiss her friend who's still busy working.

"Is Jisoo picking you up?" asked Jennie.

"Yeah, how did you know?"

"You just look like you're going to a party each time she picks you up."

Rosé giggled. "I love seeing how her jaw drops every time she sees me."

"You silly."

"I should really go now, okay?"

"Take care."

After two steps, Rosé stopped and turned back to Jennie. "Is Taehyung picking you up?"

"Nope. He's on an out of town trip."

"Hmm, you're already sharing schedules, huh?" Rosé teased. "In that case, would you like to come with us?"

"And be the third wheel? No thanks, Rosé." Jennie waved a hand.

"No, we're not going out for a date," said Rosé, chuckling. "We're surprise visiting Lisa."

The sound of that name had surely made Jennie's heart skip a beat. She turned her swivel chair around to face Rosé. "In her apartment?"

"No.. in the hospital..."

"W-what happened?"

"Uh, well, didn't she inform you that she was injured during her tennis game last Sunday?" asked Rosé, not sure why her friend wasn't aware of what happened.

Jennie shook her head no.

She didn't even tell me that her game was this Sunday.

"Oh. I thought you knew," said Rosé. "We decided to visit today because she'll be discharged tomorrow morning."

Jennie nodded in response but her mind was off somewhere else.

Why didn't she tell me? Is she mad at me because of the last talk we had; or doesn't she really care for me, not at all?

"So, are you coming or not?" asked Rosé.

Jennie blinked first. It doesn't matter if Lisa wanted to see her or not, all she wants now is to see her.

"Let me just shut down my computer, Rosé."

Hospital

"HAHAHA!"

"I can't believe it, he's here," Jisoo sniggered after hearing the loud guffaw of a man from inside the hospital room.

"He?" asked Rosé.

"Lisa's dad. He's a funny guy. You'll see." said Jisoo, knocking on the door.

A tall man, whom Jennie assumed to be Lisa's dad, opened the door for them. "Look who we have here!" he exclaimed, arms stretched wide. "Isn't this the almighty Jisoo descending from Mount Olympus to captivate women's hearts?"

Jisoo immediately threw herself for a big hug. "Haha! I missed you, uncle!"

"I missed you too, kiddo." He tapped her back. He pulled away when he noticed Rosé and Jennie. "Oh, and you brought your pretty friends. Come on in now," he said, gesturing to them. "Tiger, you got visitors."

Jennie smiled at the pet name. Her eyes immediately searched for Lisa and found her lying on the bed with a bandaged right foot. She felt relieved and worried at the same time. No one knows how much she struggled to maintain her composure not to hug the poor patient at the moment.

Although others might not have noticed it, Jennie surely saw how Lisa was surprised to see her there. It was a brief shock that Lisa immediately changed to a smile when she turned to look at Jisoo and Rosé.

Aside from Lisa's dad, there were other people inside. One is a beautiful middle age woman, whom Jennie initially assumed as Lisa's relative due to resemblance, and then there's...

Krystal? What is she doing here?

Jennie's eyebrows furrowed while looking at Krystal who's currently sitting ON the hospital bed, BESIDE Lisa.

"Hey, guys," said Lisa, looking more cheery now compared to how she was last Friday.

Jisoo pointed a finger on Lisa's foot and said, "Dude, what's up? You got it pretty bad, eh?"

"Im fine, come on. You've seen worse, remember?" said Lisa, reminding Jisoo of the car accident before, which the latter answered with a laugh.

"What happened to you?" asked Rosé, walking towards Lisa.

"Just minor foot injury. I can go back to work the day after tomorrow," Lisa answered. "Miss me already?"

"Of course," said Rosé, tapping Lisa's leg. "It just doesn't feel the same not seeing you passing by the hallway. Right, Jen?"

Jennie, who was zoning out while looking at how close Krystal's body is to Lisa, was brought back to earth. "Uh.. y-yeah.."

Not knowing what to say, Lisa looked around and realized something. "Oh, guys, meet my dad and Aunt Yaya." She pointed at the two. The siblings greeted everyone with a wai.

Lisa turned to Krystal this time. "These are my friends and colleagues: Jisoo, Rosé, and... Jennie. Guys, meet Krystal." Rosé made an "ooh" sound after hearing Krystal's name.

"Hello everyone," said Krystal with a wai.

Lisa's dad cleared his throat to gather everyone's attention. "So, now tell me, which of you girls is Lisa's girlfriend?"

Their mouths fell open at the blunt question. Lisa brought her hands to her face and said, "Ugh, dad, stop it!"

The man chuckled. "Hey, tiger, what's the matter? I'm just curious, okay?"

"How many times should I tell you that I'm single?" Lisa's voice is muffled from hiding her face behind her palms. Jennie still finds it cute, tho.

"What? I can't believe it! You're a disgrace to this family," said Lisa's dad, his hands on his waist. "You surely have pretty friends here and you don't like any of them? What happened to your taste?"

Lisa groaned even more.

"Maybe she hasn't moved on from Irene yet?" Aunt Yaya said this time.

"Ahh, the one that got away, huh? Tsk, tsk, tsk." The man shook his head in disappointment. "If tiger here wasn't a slowpoke I'm pretty sure they've been officially together, right?"

"Dad..."

"Oh, but there was a girl you were calling when we were in Bali. What happened to her?"

Lisa and Jennie had an eye contact for a fraction of a second before Lisa went to look back at her dad and shrugged.

"What? That didn't work out too? Jeez. You even bought her something. Was that a ali ---"

"DAD!"

"What? I thought that girl was special?"

Lisa looked down at her hands and said, "it's not like what you're thinking. W-we're just friends.."

Jennie looked down at her feet feeling guilty about it.

"Aish!" Lisa's dad shook his head again. He turned to Jisoo. "Didn't you teach your best friend here a thing or two about girls? You're the expert

here, right?"

"I just learned from you, master," said Jisoo, chuckling. Rosé elbowed her to make her stop. "But I've changed, uncle," she continued, putting her arm around Rosé's shoulder. "I'm serious about this one."

"Oooh, okay. I'll keep my mouth shut then." Lisa's dad said, zipping up the imaginary zipper on his mouth. "So, I'll leave you kids for now. I'll drive Yaya back to her restaurant first, okay?"

"I'll be back later, Lisa." Aunt Yaya said, kissing the top of her niece's head.

"Thanks, aunt. Dad, you drive safely, okay?"

"Agh, you're old man's reflexes are still kicking fine, don't worry about me. I'll see you later, tiger." He leaned over to kiss Lisa's head too.

There was a brief silence when the siblings left the room.

"So, you're Krystal?" Rosé initiated the conversation, walking towards her.

Krystal turned to Lisa with a puzzle look on her face. The latter just smiled at her. She looked back at Rosé and said, "Yes."

Rosé turned to Lisa this time. "Is she the one whom you talk the most of the time on the phone?"

"Uh.. yeah.." said Lisa, looking hesitant.

Rosé went back to Krystal this time. "So, I suppose you're Lisa's girlfriend?"

Krystal grimaced immediately. "No, no! We're not together..."

Lisa laughed at the question. "Rosé, don't bully her. Krystal is a good friend of mine, okay?"

Jennie raised an eyebrow. *Good friend?*

"I wouldn't want to be with someone as hopeless romantic as you," said Krystal, looking at Lisa, pretending to look disgusted.

"Oh really? But you do care for me, right?"

"It just happen to be watching your game when you crashed down the court. Duh!" Krystal rolled her eyes. "Sometimes I can't help but wonder if that really was an accident or if it's just your fault for getting drunk for two days."

"Hahaha! I'm thinking of the same thing, Krys!" Jisoo exclaimed, high-fiving Krystal. "Lisa always gets into trouble after binge drinking."

Jennie's eyebrows furrowed again.

She was watching the game? How come she knows all Lisa's whereabouts? And why is Lisa getting drunk again?

"Hey, are you okay? You're silent there," said Rosé, nudging Jennie.

Jennie realized that everyone's eyes are on hers. She felt conscious. She settled down on one of the chairs and said, "Y-yeah. I'm just a bit hungry, I guess."

"Why don't we get snacks then?" said Jisoo, turning to Rosé.

Rosé ran her hand over her tummy. "Yeah, I'm pretty hungry too."

"Aight. Let's go get something outside. Jennie, are you cool staying here for a while?" asked Jisoo.

"Yeah, don't worry."

Jisoo stretched out her hand to Rosé's shoulder and led towards the door. "We'll be back."

There was another silence when the couple left. The three of them surely felt how the ambiance inside the room changed to something unexplainable yet identifiable: awkwardness.

Jennie is secretly wishing that Krystal would just disappear so she could talk to Lisa alone. But just to break the ice, she started the conversation.

"Umm, so, how are you feeling now?" she asked Lisa.

Lisa stared at her for a while before answering. "Better."

"I see..."

"I didn't expect you'd come here," said Lisa, not looking at her.

"I could've come sooner if I had known," said Jennie, making Lisa look back at her.

Feeling the pressure in the air, Krystal went down the bed. "I think I need to get something outside. Be right back."

Jennie felt hopeful hearing that. At least Krystal knows that she needs to exit. But Lisa instantly grabbed Krystal by her arm and said, "Where are you going?"

"I'm gonna get myself some snacks too."

"No. You stay here," said Lisa. It's more of a command than just a favor. "I'm sure Jisoo will get something for everyone."

Jennie turned to look away and exhaled at the unpleasant sight in front of her.

Before anyone could speak further, they heard a knock on the door. "Excuse me, we're checking up on Lisa," said the doctor who came in. She's followed by a nurse holding a clipboard.

"Jennie, maybe we should go out for now," said Krystal. Jennie glanced at Lisa first before nodding her head.

Jennie and Krystal sat down across each other on the bench outside the room. It was silent in the hallway that time, no noise or anything, except for the sound of Krystal's heels rocking back and forth against the tiled floor.

I don't know why but my guts are telling me something's really going on.

Jennie is sitting bolt upright, hands clasped in her lap while observing the woman in front of her. It never occurred to her that there will come a day when she'll be suspecting Krystal's real role in Lisa's life. The idea of Krystal and her having equal importance to Lisa, or maybe more on Krystal, is definitely troubling her.

"You alright?" Krystal asked with a smile after noticing the stares aimed at her.

Jennie blinked after realizing what she's doing is creepy. "Y-yeah... I... I was just thinking of something..."

"Still worried about her?"

Jennie nodded. "I just found it out today, a while ago..."

"Oh, I see..."

"Were you the one who brought her here?"

"I helped, but it was actually the staff and some of her friends from the club that drove her here. I was the one whom she asked to contact her aunt."

"So, you've been here since Sunday?"

"Yeah, but not the whole day," said Krystal shrugging. "I visit Lisa whenever her aunt's busy since no one's available to look after her. Her dad just arrived this morning, and if I'm not mistaken he'll leave again tomorrow afternoon."

Jennie pressed her lips together, feeling a bit envious. "So.. you two are really that close, huh..."

"Well, if getting confided with her problems means being close, I guess you could say we really are," said Krystal, chuckling.

Jennie didn't know if it's just her but she's feeling insecure. Aside from Irene issues before, Lisa had never really opened up to her about problems, making her itchy to find out the real deal between the two.

"Do you like Lisa?" Jennie bravely asked.

Krystal's head tilted forward; her mouth fell open. She quickly recovered it with a hearty chuckle. "Wow. Why are you asking me that?"

"I just wanted to know. It's not impossible, right?"

"Why, are you jealous?"

"No," Jennie answered apathetically, trying her best not to flinch at the question.

"Still in denial, I see..."

"I'm sorry?"

Krystal clasped her hands together on her lap. "I'm gonna be honest with you here, Jennie, I know everything that's happening between you and Lisa."

Jennie was definitely flabbergasted but she tried to remain calm. "Everything like?"

"Everything about your 'relationship'," Krystal answered, making quotes signs with her fingers. "All the joys, the sweetness, and even the problems..."

"P-problems?"

"Didn't you just dump her last Friday?"

What? "I didn't dump her ---"

"Not officially yet," Krystal interrupted. "But you and I both know that it's the same thing, right? Sooner or later that's how things between you two will end."

Jennie looked away and pinched her nose, somehow knowing that Krystal has a point.

"I can't blame you if you're feeling confused or what," said Krystal, shifting her position on the bench, "but I hope you're not dense enough not to know that Lisa has feelings for you."

Jennie took a deep breath before answering. "Okay, I'd be lying if I say I never felt it, but I'm not sure if she's serious or not because she happens to treat everyone so sweetly."

"Well, she IS serious, Jen," said Krystal, putting emphasis on her words. "For pete's sake, believe me when I tell you she's head over heels for you."

Jennie wanted to say something but no words came out. Is it something that she wanted to confirm all along, however, it felt different hearing it from another person instead of Lisa herself.

"Don't tell me you still don't believe me?" asked Krystal, roaming her eyes around the area. "Well, look where we are now. While you were enjoying your weekend with your guy, Lisa was partying in hopes to forget you. I'm not blaming it on you, it's still her fault, but I want you to know that she was badly wrecked after your last talk that she didn't mind playing tennis even with a massive hangover."

"Oh, gosh..." Jennie covered her face with her palms, feeling guilty.

"Tell me, what exactly she is to you?" asked Krystal.

"What do you want to know?"

"Because you are confusing her with your actions. You can't just tell her that you cannot be with her and show up here now to make her feel that

she's important to you. That's..." Krystal paused for a second to scoff and shake her head, " ...that's ridiculous."

"That's not my intention, Krys. I was just worried."

"I know... I know... But you're making it hard for her..."

"It's equally as hard for me too..." Jennie admitted, fiddling with one of her cuticles.

"Look, you've got to make a decision fast. You can't just leave Lisa in limbo, hanging and waiting for you. If you're going to choose that guy then you need to set her free. Do her a favor by staying away from her so she could accept it fast," said Krystal.

Jennie started asking herself if it's really something she wanted to happen, for Lisa to completely move on from her. She's also worried about Lisa's condition knowing that their recent talk had resulted to a hospital visit today.

"Will she be okay if I do that?" asked Jennie.

"Of course. As long as you two stay away from each other I can assure you that it'll take only a month for her to get over you."

A month?

"T-that f-fast?" said Jennie, wondering if it really takes such a short time to forget someone who means so much.

"Yes, I won't let her linger on you that long. I'll help mend her. I'll entertain her. I'll keep her occupied," said Krystal.

Jennie slowly reclined back on her chair, eyes still fixed at Krystal. She suddenly became anxious about two things; first, how much it will be hard for her to get rid of her attachment to Lisa; and second, how she felt threatened after hearing Krystal's somewhat confession.

"I can help her get over you, Jennie," said Krystal. She leaned forward again and smiled this time to give her final blow: "I will make her forget you."

Last update for today. Good night. 😊

Late

The house is dark. No one can even tell that there is a person lying on the couch, not moving, lifeless it may seem, because she hasn't flinched a bit since she plopped herself down there.

The entire place is quite and the only thing she can hear is her own breathing.

I will make her forget you.

Jennie closed her eyes tightly and rubbed the creases on her brow.

The conversation with Krystal was cut short after Jisoo and Rosé arrived. She couldn't find an opportunity to talk to Lisa after that until they went home.

I should be happy, right? I should be happy knowing that someone will be with her if I can't stand up for her. But why am I feeling so distressed now? Uuuugghh...

It would've been easier if it's one sided, if she's the only one having these weird feelings. But this case is different now. Krystal just told her what she has doubted all along: Lisa is serious about her.

But what would she do now? She doesn't want to hurt Lisa but she can't make a decision yet. She knows she can't pick Lisa but at the same time she doesn't want to let her go either. Selfish it may seem, but it is the exact reason for her confusion now.

What's hurting her more is the fact that Lisa obviously feels comfortable around Krystal. Jennie knows that if she won't make a move anytime soon, Krystal will surely be able to replace her.

Jennie is walking towards the lift when she spotted two familiar figures already waiting there. She smiled at the sight right away, knowing that the back she's looking at belongs to Lisa. However, her smile faded as guilt strikes her again when she saw the crutch on Lisa's right hand.

Jisoo noticed her. "Well, hello there, beautiful."

"Oh, hello there, handsome," she greeted Jisoo back with her sweet smile. "Getting lost this early, huh?"

"Best friend duties." Jisoo pointed at Lisa. "Can't drive."

"Well, that's so sweet of you." Jennie turned to Lisa this time and playfully nudged her to see if she'll be ignored or not. "Hey, good morning..."

Lisa turned for a quick glance, force a smile and said, "Morning..." She went back immediately to look at the floor signal.

Jennie took it on her mental notepad. Lisa didn't completely ignore her but something's still off.

"Where's your girlfriend?" Jennie asked Jisoo instead.

"She went ahead of us. I had to pick this brat here first," said Jisoo, lightly punching Lisa's arm, which the latter responded with a harder nudge. Jisoo laughed at it. "Well, since Jennie's here, I better go ahead. Could you assist her for me, Jen?"

Jennie unconsciously placed a hand on her chest, emotionally unprepared of being alone with Lisa. "Y-yeah, sure."

"Don't sweat it. I can handle myself," said Lisa apathetically. She turned to Jisoo this time to give an arm punch. "And don't think of me as a weakling!"

Jisoo stepped backward to keep distance from the attacker who's seriously throwing her punches. "I better go now, Jen, before someone here bruises me."

Jennie chuckled. "Okay, you take care."

Jisoo politely bowed at Jennie first before she raised her thumbs to Lisa. "Dude, I'll pick you up later, okay?"

"Yah, go already, will you," Lisa snorted, pretending to be annoyed. She looked back at the floor signal as she taps the crutch on the floor.

Jennie can't take the smile off her face. All the unpleasant feelings she had these past few days just vanished. It's just now that she admitted to herself that Lisa's mere presence is giving her solace.

She lightly shook her head after realizing that Lisa's unfaltering charm isn't affected by the crutch she's holding. Her hoodie and jeans perfectly matched her somewhat disarrayed hair --- which Jennie assumed that Lisa had done when she absently scratched her head.

Jennie hugged herself for a moment and looked away. If there's one thing she's thankful for getting to talk to Krystal alone, it is finding out about Lisa's real feelings for her.

The lift door opened eventually. Lisa managed to get in fast even though she's limping. Jennie couldn't help but feel worried, hoping that she's the one taking care of Lisa now.

They got off on their designated floor and Lisa gave her a quick gesture before walking straight to her department. Based on her actions; the somewhat odd responses, the fake smiles, avoiding eye contacts, Jennie knows that Lisa is still hurting because of her. She sighed as she looks at Lisa's back walking away from her.

I really should talk to her soon to clarify everything last Friday.

Jennie initially thought of buying lunch to save Lisa from walking here and there; killing two birds with one stone. It's also the perfect change to get to talk to her alone. Unfortunately, before Jennie could even execute her plan, some of the fan girls had the same idea; they already brought Lisa

something. And according to Rosé's observation, there were several visitors today.

Disappointed with the failure of her first plan, Jennie decided to ride along with Jisoo and Lisa in the afternoon. In that way, she could offer Lisa help to her apartment where they can talk seriously. Taehyung is out until Friday, a perfect opportunity for Jennie since her mom won't bug her to go out with him.

After seeing Lisa pass by the hallway, Jennie hurried to fix her stuff so she could follow right away. She knows that Lisa will decline her offer if she'll ask for it straight.

"Wow, going home on the dot today, huh?" said Rosé.

"Yeah, well --- Aren't you going home with Jisoo?" asked Jennie, noticing that Rosé is still busy doing something.

"She'll pick me up later," said Rosé, not taking her eyes off the computer. "She had an unexpected client meeting a while ago. She said it might be done in an hour."

Jennie turned to look at the hallway door. *What about Lisa?*

Noticing her friend's musing, Rosé turned her chair around. "Why?"

"I, uh, nothing..." Jennie bent down to cheek kiss Rosé. "I better go now, mom's waiting for me."

"Okay. I'll see you tomorrow."

Don't tell me she's planning to go home alone? Will she ride a cab? I should go with her.

Jennie is already striding towards the lobby, hoping that Lisa isn't fast enough to get into the elevator quick.

"Lisa!" Jennie called out when she had a glimpse of Lisa's back. She felt hope when Lisa turned around. However, her footsteps slowed down when she saw another figure beside Lisa.

"Oh, hi there, Jennie," said Krystal, flashing her pearly white teeth.

"H-hey..." Jennie's footsteps came to a complete stop when she noticed Krystal's arm looped into Lisa's.

"Anything you need from me?" asked Lisa.

"Huh?"

Noticing Jennie's confusion, Lisa chuckled. "You called me, right?"

Jennie felt that something's not right. After their talk last Friday, this is the first time she's seen Lisa's natural smile. Her eyes shifted to the lady beside who's clinging on Lisa like there's no tomorrow.

Is it because of her?

"Jennie?"

Jennie snapped out of it after seeing Lisa's hand waving before her face. "Uh.. well... I was just checking if you have a ride home. Rosé told me that Jisoo's too busy to pick you up."

"Oh. Don't worry. That's why Krystal came here. I asked her to drive me home."

"Well.. that's.. that's good..."

"I had to close my flower shop for a while just to pick you up here. You owe me another one, okay?" said Krystal, playfully hitting Lisa's arm.

"Ow!" said Lisa, pretending to be hurt. "Okay, tell me how can I make it up to you?"

"Hmm.. why don't you go to my house first before I drive you home? Mom has cooked something for us."

That surely brought Lisa excitement. "Really? That's sounds great! I'd love to!" Then she turned to Jennie. "Are you going to be okay? He's picking you up, right?"

Not wanting to sound defeated, Jennie nodded.

Krystal tightened her hug on Lisa's arm and said, "Great. So, we'll go ahead now, Jennie. You take care, okay?"

"Have fun." Jennie feigned smile. She watched the two happily walked towards the elevator, chuckling and nudging each other like kids.

Jennie felt shortness in her breathing. Her heart started beating irregularly. Suddenly a wave of mixed emotions surged into her chest, pulling her heart down. The sight of the two making fun of each other is torturing her.

Ding!

The lift door opened and they both waved her goodbye before going in. Jennie just stood there, feeling weak. She brought a hand to her chest, remembering what Krystal told her.

One month? She said one month, right?

It may seem impossible to do it that fast but Jennie can't erase Lisa's smile off her mind. What's troubling her is the fact that she knows that she's not the reason for those smiles. Jennie went back staring lost at the elevator area.

Am I already late?

I'll update again later. ☺☹

Friends

Sunday - Dining in Space

"So you're saying that you two got back together?"

"Yeah. We're officially together again. Isn't it funny how she only realized that four months after the break up?" said Taehyung, scooping food into his mouth.

Jennie set down the glass of mango juice on the table. "Maybe she just got confused? At least the breakup had made her realize how much you mean to her, right?"

"Honestly, she panicked a little after she found out from my dad that I was going out with you." Taehyung chuckled.

"Really? Should I start hiding now?" asked Jennie, laughing.

"Haha, don't worry. She doesn't kill, but yeah, she tortures..."

"Ooh, scary..." Jennie pretends to shudder, making Taehyung laugh again. "But seriously, though, I'm happy for you."

"Well, thank you," said Taehyung, bowing slightly. "But you know what, I realized something just now. The breakup was hard for me, yes, but I just thought that I should be happy it happened, right?"

"And why?"

"Well, if Sana didn't break up with me before I don't think we'll get closer," said Taehyung seriously. "Being friends with you is a break up retribution. I'm glad it happened."

Jennie gave him a warm smile. Although a lot of things has been troubling her lately, she can't deny that Taehyung is one of those few people who

gives her joy from time to time. "I'm thankful to have you as a friend too."

Taehyung smiled at her and went back to eating his food. After few seconds of silence, he spoke again. "How about you, how's he?"

Jennie was glad that she didn't choke on her food because that question had surely struck her bull's eye. The truth is, she's not okay. She never got the chance to talk to Lisa until Friday because Krystal was the one who drove her and picked her up in the office. Jennie didn't even bother to ask Lisa out over the weekend because she remembered how Krystal told Rosé, when they all got together in the elevator, about her weekend plans with Lisa.

Jennie isn't sure how it happened. Suddenly, she felt like she doesn't exist in Lisa's world anymore, and it's killing her. She was glad that Taehyung asked her out today because she was just gloomy all day in her room.

"It's hopeless, Taehyung.." said Jennie, absently tapping the tip of her fork on her plate.

"Hmm? How come? What happened?"

"Everything is just too complicated now, more complicated than you can imagine."

"I don't mean to intervene but I think I know what your real problem is," said Taehyung, pausing a little while waiting for Jennie to look up to him, "it's that Lisa, right?"

"H-how ---"

"Well, anyone can notice the closeness, yeah; but only the keen ones can tell that there is something going on between the two of you."

"Oh..." Jennie looked down, feeling shy.

"She's the one you're with in Gampo, right?" asked Taehyung, getting a nod from Jennie. "She's the one you were talking to in café that Friday night too, right?"

Jennie nodded again. "I'm sorry. I was afraid to tell it to you because I thought you won't accept it."

"Why won't I accept it? I was just waiting for you to tell it to me," said Taehyung sincerely. "And why are you keeping everything bottled up until now? Do you want to make yourself go crazy?"

"Because it's not as easy what you're having with Sana.."

Taehyung leaned forward, his arms against the edge of the table. "I know, but you can't keep yourself hurting like that. Is this because of your mom?"

Jennie nodded slowly. "There's no way she will accept it."

"Maybe you and Lisa could work it out in a different way? Have you talked to her about it?"

Jennie shook her head. "She doesn't even know what I really for her. And she's been avoiding me since she found out that you and I have been going out."

"Oh, I'm sorry." Taehyung smiled apologetically. "Did I ruin it?"

Jennie had a dont-worry-about-it face as she shakes her head.

"Do you want me to talk to her to clarify things out?"

"No. There's no need for that."

"Why?"

"She might be already over me."

"That fast? That's impossible," said Taehyung, shaking his head. "If she's really into you there's no way she can get over you that instant. Maybe she's not really that serious about you?"

"She is." Jennie answered with a sigh. "She confronted me a week ago about it. I was just confused. I didn't know what to say. I end up denying

everything. I even told her I can't be with her. That's the last time we really talked. The next thing I knew is she was treating me like a total stranger."

"Well, you can't blame her for doing that to you. Can't you just approach her and talk to her again?"

"I can't. She's already going out with another girl."

"Going out like dating?"

"Maybe hanging out for now, but who knows. The girl is obviously enamored with Lisa," Jennie grunted, slightly rolling her eyes.

"And you're jealous." Taehyung concluded, snickering. "So, you're telling me you're giving up just like that?"

"That girl has no issues like me, Tae. I can't blame Lisa for that. She knows there's no hope in us."

"What if she still wants you but she's just avoiding you because she thought you didn't want to be with her?" said Taehyung, waving his fork again. "Or maybe she's avoiding you because she thought we're an item?"

Jennie brought her hands up to massage her temples. "Uuuugghh..."

"One question, Jen: do you really love her?"

It surely sent a giddy feeling all over her body. Jennie brought her hands down to look at him. She took a deep breath and weighed herself for the answer, the answer that she has not admitted even to herself until now.

"I'm scared, Tae.."

"Scared?"

"I'm so scared..." whispered Jennie, clenching her fist. "This is the first time I've felt something like this. I... I feel so vulnerable around her, so out of control, so helpless, like my very breath depends on her."

Taehyung reached out for her hand to comfort her.

"If I defy my mom now and be with her, will she be able to stand it with me? What if she'll leave me in the future? What would happen to me?"

"Sshh.. you're thinking too much, Jen," said Taehyung, rubbing his thumb at the back of her hand. "Every relationship goes through something like that, like me and Sana. But that's not what you should be thinking now. You're not even together yet for goodness sake. If you two have mutual feelings for each other I don't see any reason why you shouldn't be together."

"But what about my mom?"

"If you really love her then you've got to stand for it. Your mom will learn to accept it. Eventually."

Jennie looked away with a pout.

"Don't let this one get away, Jennie. It's hard to find someone to love, but it's harder to find someone who will love you back," said Taehyung, squeezing her hand. "If you're gonna let her go away without a fight, you'll eventually regret it in the future. You deserve the right to be happy, so do it, not for Lisa or anyone else, do it yourself."

It was really encouraging. Jennie felt the heavy feeling on her chest becoming a little lighter. She was able to make out a small smile in response. "Thank you, Tae. Really."

"Anytime," he said, pulling his hand. "Now since it's your fault for pushing her away you need to make an effort to talk to her."

"Look who we have here," suddenly a familiar voice from the back caught their attention.

Jennie almost fell off her chair when she saw Krystal and Lisa approaching them. "Krystal. Lisa," she said, completely forgetting the proper way to construct a sentence.

"I knew it was you the moment we got in. I had to take a closer look to make sure," said Krystal happily. "Oh, my apologies for the sudden intrusion. I'm Krystal, by the way."

"Taehyung," said Tae, shaking her hand. He turned to look at Lisa this time and waved at her. "Dude.."

Lisa beckoned her head to say hello. She then nudged Krystal after. "Hey, come on, I'm hungry."

"Just a few more moments, Lisa. Don't you feel excited seeing them here?"

"They are already enjoying their food. Let's stop disturbing them. Aunt Yaya is already waiting for us."

"Nah, it's alright, it's perfectly fine. We're almost done here anyway," said Taehyung, wiping his mouth with the cloth napkin.

"Are you coming to the party tomorrow, Taehyung?"

"Party?"

"Uh, well, it's our company's foundation day tomorrow so there's no work to give way for the party in the afternoon," said Jennie. "Every employee can bring a friend or a loved one along with them."

"Did you invite him, Jen?" asked Krystal.

"Ah, no, no, he's busy, Krys."

"Oh, I see. Lisa invited me for tomorrow."

Jennie's eyes shifted to Lisa who's looking somewhere far. "Oh, that's cool. I guess I'll see you there, Krystal."

"Oh my gosh, Jennie. If you had told me earlier about it then maybe I shouldn't have made plans with MY GIRLFRIEND," said Taehyung, winking at Jennie discreetly.

Jennie smiled at that, amused by how Taehyung had put emphasis on his words. She noticed from her peripheral vision how Lisa's head turned to Taehyung after hearing what he said.

"It's okay, Tae. It's not like I'd be alone there. I have my team. Plus, you wouldn't want YOUR GIRLFRIEND to get mad at you by canceling your date, right?" said Jennie, riding along.

"That would be World War 4," said Taehyung laughing.

Krystal looked confused and was obviously speechless. "Oh. Okay. So, we better go ahead. Fancy meeting you guys here."

Taehyung and Jennie waved as they watch the two pick a table on the other side of the area.

"I'm sorry. I didn't know they'd see us here," said Jennie.

"You knew they'd come?"

"No, not really. But this restaurant is owned by Lisa's aunt. When you asked me earlier where I wanted to go, I immediately thought of here because I always wanted to see this place. It never occurred to me that they'd be here tonight," said Jennie, glancing at Lisa and Krystal's direction.

She said she'd bring me here one time.

"Well, no harm done," said Taehyung, shrugging. He leaned back in his chair, his expression shifting to excitement. "Did you see Lisa's face when she heard me? Hahaha!"

Jennie couldn't hold of her giggle because she saw it too. "Yeah..."

"It only means one thing. She's not over you yet. Your objective is to make sure you'll talk to her tomorrow. Affirmative?"

Jennie couldn't help but smile at Taehyung's soldier-like tone. "I surely will, sir," she said, giving a failed salute.

Taehyung patted her head. "That's my girl."

DON'T FORGET TO VOTE BLINKS. ♥

VOTE FOR BLACKPINK and I'll update more. 😊

Tears

7:00 pm

The party is being held in a hotel grand ball. Everyone was asked to wear either cocktail dress & suits --- if they prefer it --- or smart casual attire.

Jisoo, who looks exquisitely handsome in her suit drove Jennie and Rosé there. Jennie wore a simple black off shoulder dress while Rosé wore something extravagant, a full-skirted red cocktail gown curving the shape of her body.

Suho bought his boyfriend along while Somi and Bam, who were almost done with their internship, came in together too.

She knows that she should be enjoying now but Jennie feels like something is still missing. She hasn't seen Lisa yet. She keeps on glancing at the graphics team's table to check if the only missing member has finally arrived. Not too long her hopes started building up when she saw Lisa and Krystal came in together. Although limping a bit, Lisa is able to walk now without a crutch.

Krystal is wearing an elegant green dress while Lisa wears simple smart casual attire: black slacks, v-neck shirt inside, and a gray wool coat. They went first to Jennie's team where a little punching and nudging battle happened between Lisa and Jisoo, then they went straight to sit at graphics team table.

Jennie watched Lisa and Krystal as they walk away from them, determined to do one thing tonight.

9:00 pm

Jennie had already abandoned the plan of talking to Lisa. Her mood has been ruined since the party had started. It's not because she doesn't have a partner but because a certain couple keeps on irritating her. For the nth time that night she had tried to fight the temptation of looking at them just to realize in the end that she still keeps glancing back.

Jennie is trying to stay calm by pretending to be happy, talking with Suho and the others. The feeling that she thought would go away lingered instead, and it went worse as the night passes by. It's like a poison that slowly builds up in her chest, gradually getting heavier, making her feel like she just wants to explode.

"Hey, you sure you're alright?" Rosé asked her for the third time already.

"Yeah. I'm just not feeling quite well, maybe getting a fever or something." Jennie answered lazily.

Rosé brought her hand to Jennie's forehead to check her temperature. "Do you want to go home now? I could ask Jisoo to drive you..."

"No, I'm fine, Rosé. Let's just enjoy this night."

Out of the blue, a loud laughter from the graphics team caught some attention. Of course, Jennie couldn't control herself again from looking. She saw Krystal laughing with the entire team, one hand on Lisa's thigh.

Jennie quickly averted her gaze and sighed.

"Are they together?" asked Rosé, looking at the same table.

"I don't know." said Jennie, uninterested. She sliced the chocolate cake on her plate and took a bite. "Maybe Jisoo knows something?"

"Uh, no," said Jisoo, making an 'x' sign with her arms. "Lisa isn't the type of friend who shares things like this."

"But I thought you were the best buddies?" asked Rosé.

"Yes, we are, but Lisa doesn't love confiding about girls unless she's having a problem. Unless there's no issue yet, I don't think she will share details about her thing with that Krystal."

Jennie bit the inside of her cheek, thinking if Jisoo already knows what happened between her and Lisa.

"I could ask her straight right if you two are really curious," said Jisoo.

"Let's just assume that they are together," said Jennie, not wanting to hear more about them. "Even if they aren't official yet it's pretty obvious now that's where they'll head, right?"

"Maybe," said Rosé, glancing one more time at the other table. "But I thought Lisa is in love with another girl?"

Jennie and Jisoo looked at each other quick, as if knowing what the other is thinking.

"Uh, that, uh... I don't know what happened to them," said Jisoo, "The last time we talked about that girl was before the accident."

"Have you even met her?" Rosé followed up.

Jisoo rubbed the side of her neck with her palm. "Uhh..."

"Alright ladies and gents, the ball is now open for anyone who would like to dance. The real party has started!"

Everyone screamed in excitement after the host's announcement. People started swarming towards the dance floor. The formal ambiance is now turned to a rowdy atmosphere. Men in suits took their coats off and folded their sleeves up. Some woman in dresses didn't mind dancing without their heels. Others were prepared enough to bring extra attire.

"Your highness, would you do me the honor of accompanying me to the dance floor?" asked Jisoo, offering a hand to Rosé.

"It'll be my pleasure," said Rosé, taking Jisoo's hand. She got up and turned to Jennie before leaving. "We'll be right back."

"Go ahead, enjoy.." said Jennie, shooping them away.

Jennie is glad that not all the members of her team were in the mood to dance, giving her some company while waiting there. She took that opportunity to observe the couple from the other table. Somehow she's glad that Lisa still hasn't fully recovered yet, making it easier for her to resist fan girls asking her to dance along.

Ugh. How would I be able to talk to her if that Krystal won't leave her side even for a second?

Jennie couldn't get rid of the heavy feeling inside her chest and it's clouding her mind now. She can't think clearly. She can't even hear the music. Her eyes are locked only at them. She tried to look away many times but as much as she doesn't want to see them happy, she can't help but check what they've been doing from time to time.

Jennie couldn't count how many times she sighed that night. The need to fill her lungs with oxygen arises each time she sees them laughing at each other, smiling like no one else matters. It just made her think: is there still a point talking to Lisa tonight? Would that even help in changing the current situation? What if Lisa is really over her?

Jennie knows it. She's not okay. Not at all. Right from the start, the moment she saw them came in, she was not okay. Isn't it ironic how she loved seeing Lisa's smile and despised it at the same time just because those smiles were meant for another person?

If I had been brave enough that should have been me, right?

Then the most unexpected thing happened. She felt her heart jump when she saw them get up from their chairs, Krystal gesturing a hand to the dance floor. Jennie unconsciously placed a hand on her chest.

Dug! Dug!

The two walked towards the crowd with Krystal patiently assisting the limping Lisa.

Dug! Dug!

Jennie literally felt a pinch in her heart when she saw Krystal guiding Lisa's arm around her waist, then she hangs her arms loosely around Lisa's neck.

Dug! Dug!

Despite the loud disco music, Krystal and Lisa started swaying together, slowly yet sweetly.

Dug! Dug!

Jennie feels another shortness in her breathing. The heavy weight on her chest makes her want to burst now. She can literally feel her heart erratically beating at the moment.

Dug! Dug!

"Jennie?"

She didn't noticed that Rosé has already approached her. Her eyes were locked on the dance floor.

Dug! Dug!

Krystal moved closer, hooking her chin on Lisa's shoulder. Lisa whispered something to her ear and it made her giggle.

Dug! Dug!

Krystal pulled away and stared at Lisa's face, a sweet smile plastered on hers. She held Lisa's cheek with both hands.

Dug! Dug! Dug!

...and slowly... Krystal leaned forward to...

Jennie looked away immediately and stood up from her chair. Her vision is blurry now. She aimed for the exit but someone grabbed her by the arm.

"Jennie, what's wrong?"

Jennie turned to Rosé quick, still trying to hold off the rainfall. "I don't know... I don't know.." she said, shaking her head. She yanked her hand away and strode towards the exit.

Rosé tried to call out one more time but her friend didn't turn back. She trailed where Jennie was looking at and saw the 'scene'. Right there and then she knew it.

Jisoo, who saw what just happened held Rosé by her waist. "I think you should follow her. I'll try to talk to Lisa too."

Due to her blurred vision, Jennie doesn't know where her feet had brought her. She felt the need to run away from the crowd. She ends up in someplace that looks like a garden or a playground. She's not sure herself. She clasped for something that seemed to be a back of a chair to support her shaking body. She sat onto it and broke her defenses down entirely as she lets all her grief be washed away by her tears.

Jennie can't take the image off her mind. She saw how Krystal's face moved closer to Lisa's. It's all clear to her now. It's over. Everything about her and Lisa is over now.

But what she can't accept is the fact that she knew she had the chance, she was just too dumb to take it, and now it's all gone.

"Jennie..."

All her inhibitions faded when she felt Rosé rubbed her back. Jennie couldn't hold it this time, everything flowed out. Her sobs grew louder as it shakes her small frame.

"Just cry it all out," said Rosé, sitting down beside her, "it'll lessen the pain somehow."

"Is it.. is it really supposed to hurt this way, Rosé?"

"Yes it is, Jen. It is.." said Rosé, still rubbing Jennie's back. "It hurts that way because you love her."

Jennie turned her body to face Rosé and wiped her tears with her hands, which is pointless because tears just keep rolling down her eyes.

"I always thought that this is just a phase.. something that will go away in time.." said Jennie, trembling, "...but it didn't."

Rosé let out a sigh, couldn't help but feel sorry for her friend.

"Was.. was I wrong for being scare, Rosé, was I?"

"No, no, you're not. That's perfectly normal," said Rosé, brushing the remaining stray hair away from Jennie's face. "You were struggling so hard because you never thought that you'd fall for someone like her, right?"

"But it is my fault... She.. she confronted me about it and I pushed her away... And now look at me.. crying over her because she found someone new..." Jennie's voice was all nasally due to her stuffy nose.

"Sshhh..." Rosé pulled her friend for a hug. "What do you want to do now?"

"I wanna go home, Rosé."

"Don't you want to talk to Lisa first?"

"No... I don't want to see her for now please..."

Rosé continues to rub her friend's back as she lets out a sigh. "Okay.. okay..."

"W-what was that for?"

Lisa is stunned by what just happened. Although the kiss neither touched her lips nor her cheek, still, it left her dumbfounded.

"That's for the final blow," said Krystal with a smirk, fixing Lisa's collar.

"Huh?"

"I needed to pull out a show for your girl to realize what she really feels for you."

That made Lisa look at Jennie's table and found her not there. "You ---"

"I made her jealous," said Krystal, shrugging. "I had to make her feel that I'm so into you so she'll feel alarmed. Not that I'm not into you. I mean, I like you but not really romantically."

Lisa scratched the top of her head in confusion. "I don't get it."

Krystal rolled her eyes. "Now go, just follow her. She ran out after I kissed you."

"Ran out?"

"No more questions for now, okay? Go after her and patch things up. I'll answer your questions some other time."

"B-but what about you?"

"I can drive myself home, Lisa."

"You sure?"

"Definite. Now off you go before I get mad at you," said Krystal, shooing Lisa. "Just make sure that the next call I'll be receiving from you is a good news, okay?"

That made Lisa smile. "Sure. I owe you big time, Krys."

Lisa saw her beautiful friend in suit walking towards her.

"Dude, what the hell was that? I thought you love Jennie?" asked Jisoo.

"Of course, I do love her. You know that, right?"

"You love her? Then what was that thing with Krystal?"

Lisa grunted as she pinched the bridge of her nose. "It's hard to explain things now. But please tell me where Jennie is. I really need to talk to her."

"You better fix this or else Rosé will kill you," said Jisoo leading the way out.

The two looked around but couldn't find Rosé and Jennie. It is when they've finally decided to go back inside when they spotted Rosé walking alone towards the entrance.

Lisa, who was still limping, approached Rosé as fast as she could. "Where is she?"

"I helped her to get a cab. She's on her way home now."

"What? I... I need to follow her," said Lisa, fishing her car key from her pocket.

Rosé tapped her shoulder. "No need, Lisa. It won't work for now. Let her anger subside first. I suggest you talk to her tomorrow."

"But ---"

"You won't be able to fix it tonight, I can assure you that."

"But Rosé...."

"She might be right, dude," said Jisoo, putting her arm around Lisa's shoulder. "The damage looks bad. Let Jennie cool down for a while. Settle this tomorrow."

Lisa stared at Jisoo and Rosé for long before she sighed in defeat. "Fine."

"Maybe you should go home too, dude. You look tired."

"No, no. No one's going home yet," said Rosé, making the two look at her. "No one's going home unless you two tell me what exactly is happening here."

Jennie hurried into her room and closed the door, not wanting her mom to see her crying. However, it was a futile effort because her mom came knocking at her door right away.

"Jennie, dear, what happened?"

"Just.. just work issues, mom. I'm going to sleep now," said Jennie, trying to make her voice sound as clear as possible.

"No, you're not okay, dear."

"I'm fine, mom, just leave me alone for now."

"Is this because of Taehyung?"

"Taehyung and I are okay. It really is work issues, don't worry about me."

Jennie was glad that there was silence after that. She thought her mom won't push it until she heard the voice from behind the door again. "Or is this because of that Suzuki Swift owner friend of yours?"

Jennie whipped her head to the door, bewildered.

"Lalisa Manoban, right?"

"H-how did ---"

"Why don't you open your door first so we could talk better?"

Jennie obeyed right away. The door revealed her mom leaning against the door frame with crossed arms. "Don't you realize that I have my connections to look up the owner of that cars plate number?"

Jennie grimaced at her stupidity. But then she had enough for the day. She doesn't have strength to discuss and explain things anymore. "I don't want to argue with you on this, mom," she said, plopping back down her bed. "And for the sake of your piece of mind, we're not together, okay?"

"So, it's really because of her?" it came more like of a statement rather than a question.

As much as Jennie wants to take the idea off her mind it keeps on recurring to her. And in no time she felt something forming in her eyes again.

"Mom, please... I don't want to cry again... I just want to sleep... I still have work tomorrow."

Sensing her daughter is about to break down, the older lady sat down beside Jennie. "Tell me, what happened?"

Jennie thought she had already cried everything out; from the hotel to Rosé, and in the cab, but she felt the ache coming back and her eyes were teary all over. She started sobbing again.

"Why does it have to be so faithful, mom?" said Jennie, her voice breaking.

Instead of getting mad she was weakened by the agony of her daughter. "What has she done to you?"

"Nothing... I was the one who hurt her first... I told her that I cannot be with her. And now I can't stand seeing her with someone else."

"Oh, darling..."

"I did it because I know you won't accept it, you won't accept her; you won't accept is, right?"

"B-but I thought you like Taehyung?"

Jennie shook her head. "What I felt for Taehyung is nothing compared to what I'm feeling for her. I just couldn't admit it to myself before."

Jennie cupped a hand over her mouth to stifle her sobbing. Her tears kept on wetting the pillow her head is resting on. She thought she was okay after all the crying earlier but it feels like she's back to square one.

"I'm sorry, mom..."

"What are you apologizing for, dear?"

"I'm sorry for being like this.. for disappointing you..."

"Oh, dear.."

"I've tried to stay away from her... I don't know how it happened. The next thing I knew is I can't go on a day without seeing or even hearing her voice..."

Her mom sighed in response.

"And I'm sorry for keeping this secret from you, mom...."

The older lady rubbed Jennie's arm and said, "Didn't you think that I already have an idea about it?"

"What? H-how?"

"Oh, come on, Jennie. I'm not dumb not to notice how your mood is so vibrant each time that red Suzuki Swift drives you home or picks you up. It's something that I've never seen before from you, that's why I investigate."

"Then why you didn't say anything?" asked Jennie, sitting up.

"I was waiting for you to tell it to me first. I thought it was just a simple crush so I didn't bother to confront you about it. But as time goes by it seems to me that it's getting deeper, that's when I forced you to go out with Taehyung," her mom admitted.

Jennie put her hand up to her neck dimple and looked away.

"I thought that going out with him would bring your old feelings back, but as I can see it, it didn't work. That Lalisa has surely something, huh," Jennie's mom said, lightly chuckling at that.

Jennie was able to make out a small smile, mentally agreeing to her mom.

"Let me clear it up for you, I still don't want you having that kind of relationship...."

Jennie looked down and nodded.

"...but at the same time, I don't want to see you cry like this again because of me.."

Jennie looked up to her mom.

"I know how it hurts to lose someone you love, I've been there when your dad left us," her mom said, stroking Jennie's hair. "But it's more painful to know that you love each other but you can't be together because the others just can't accept it."

"Mom ---"

Jennie's mom hugged her suddenly. "Oh, dear, I should be the one apologizing because I've caused you so much pain. Didn't you think that I notice how slowly you were dying these past few weeks? Was it because of her too?"

Jennie nodded. "But I'm gonna be fine, mom, don't worry..."

"I'd like to make it up to you. I'd like you to know what or how it feels to be loved by someone you love. I'd like to see that smile again on your face that

I only see each time that red car drives you home."

"What do you mean?"

"Don't hold yourself back now, if there's still a chance, get her back and smile again," said the older lady, giving a warm smile.

Jennie's eyes widened.

"But on one condition," her mom said, raising an index finger, "if everything goes okay, bring her here to meet me."

"Oh." Jennie bit her lower lip in hesitation.

"I promise I won't kill her, okay? I'll just skin her alive."

"Mom!"

The older lady laughed. "I'm kidding, okay? As long as she didn't hurt you I'll keep the knives in the shelf. Is that clear?"

Tears formed again in Jennie's eyes, not because she's hurting but because she's feeling close to her mom more than ever. "Thanks, mom. I love you..."

"Now stop crying there and get some sleep, okay?" the older lady said, wiping her daughter's tears with her thumb. She hugged her again. "I love you too."

Okay. Done for today. 😊😊

Game

"She called in sick today," said Rosé.

Lisa slumped her shoulders, sighing. She can't take her eyes away from Jennie's empty table. "Do you think she's okay now?"

"I don't know. She just said she's not in the mood to go to work today."

"Have you told her about what we've talked last night?"

"Nope, not yet. It's your job now to tell her that, not me, 'honey'," said Rosé, raising an eyebrow.

"Oh..." Lisa scratched her nape, feeling shy and guilty.

"Do it today or else I'll kill you for making my friend cry, okay?"

"I will, I will. I don't have plans of prolonging this either. After last night all I wanted to do is just to straighten up things with her."

"But I think you've got to be a little tough. Expect that she would resent you at first, or maybe push you away. It's a normal defense mechanism of a person who's hurt," said Rosé.

Lisa puffed her cheeks and blew air from her mouth. "You're right. I'll take note of that." She glanced at her wristwatch and noticed that it's only after lunch. "I'll go to her house later. I should go back to work now," she said, walking away.

"Lisa..."

"Yeah?"

Rosé got up from her chair. "This is the first time I'd seen Jennie really got swept off her feet, so please, please take care of her, okay? I'm entrusting

her to you because I know she'll be in safe hands."

Lisa smiled. "Thanks, Rosé. I promise that I will take care of her."

"You better be, or else..." Rosé didn't finish her sentence but she made a throat cut signal with her hand.

Lisa chuckled. "I'll remember that."

Lisa pulled her car over onto the side of the road in front of Jennie's house. She rolled down her window about halfway to better see if someone's inside.

I wonder if she's home. Should I ring the doorbell? But what if her mom sees me?

Lisa grabbed her phone instead. She exhaled before dialing Jennie's number.

Brr.. brr.. brr..

It took a few more rings before someone answered. *"Hello?"*

Lisa heard small sniffs on the line. "Uh, Jennie?"

"Yeah, what?"

"Uh, are you at home? You didn't come to work today."

"I was not feeling well."

"Oh. So.. you're just home?"

"Yeah, why?"

Lisa felt a little nervous knowing that Jennie is just a few meters away from her. "Is your mom in there too?"

"Nope, she's still at work. Why do you keep asking me things?"

"I-I'm here in front of your house..."

"What?!"

Before Lisa could response she heard Jennie move, as if getting up from a chair or bed, then the sound of her footsteps followed. Eventually, Lisa saw her peeking through the window. Lisa fully rolled down her window and waved a hand.

"What are you doing here?"

"Uh, visiting you?"

"I don't need visitors now, Lisa."

Seeing Jennie through the window made Lisa realize how much she missed this little tyrant. "I came here to talk to you."

"Is there anything else to talk about?"

"There is, Jennie. There's a lot, especially after what happened last night."

"Go home, Lisa. I'm not in the mood to talk to you yet," said Jennie, walking away from the window.

Lisa panicked when Jennie disappeared from her sight, afraid that the latter will end the call right away. "But, Jennie, please, just let me explain things to you. I'll be waiting for you down here, okay?"

"I said I'm not in the mood to talk about it yet. I don't even want to see your face now."

Lisa massaged her aching head with her right hand. "But I need to talk to you, just one last time. If you don't want to talk to me ever again I promise I won't bug you after this."

There was no response.

"Just this once, Jennie..."

Another dead air.

Lisa's now starting to lose hope. "Please, honey.. please...?"

There was another long silence on the line before Jennie finally sighed.

"Give me fifteen minutes," said Jennie, then ending the call right away.

Lisa slumped back on her chair, relieved. Jennie's stubbornness somehow made her doubt what Rosé told her last night. Is Jennie really that mad to treat her that way?

Waiting inside her car made her feel uneasy. Lisa's nervous. This is the first time they are going to talk alone after that fateful Friday dialogue where she almost thought everything's over. Truth is she really wants to make up with Jennie now but she's not prepared what to say yet. And Jennie's in her monster mood today which might make things more challenging.

After fifteen minutes she received a message from Jennie: *Let's talk inside.*

Right after she read the message, she heard a clanging gate being opened. Jennie didn't wait for her, instead, she went back inside the house after opening the gate.

Is she serious about this?

With hesitation, Lisa went out of her car and walked towards the house. She closed the gate behind her and inhaled first before walking through the front door.

Lisa's eyes surveyed the area before taking another step to completely let herself in. The curtains were all drawn, making it a little darker inside. Jennie was nowhere to be seen.

Lisa took a few more steps until she reached the living room where she saw the picture frames on the shelves. It was Jennie's pictures from her childhood to her college years. There's another picture of a young Jennie

with a man --- whom Lisa assumed to be her dad --- then there's their family picture.

Lisa smile. *So cute.*

"Make yourself comfortable."

Lisa turned around and saw Jennie holding a glass of orange juice. "Oh. Hey."

Jennie's wearing a blue t-shirt and denim shorts. Her brownish wavy hair is hanging down loose just passed her shoulders. Lisa can't help but marvel at the beauty in front of her; so simple yet so sophisticated.

But Lisa noticed something when she looked at Jennie's face.

Her eyes are swollen. So, she really was crying?

"Here." Jennie handed the glass. "Let's talk over there."

"Thanks." Lisa took it and followed Jennie. "Are you sure you don't want to talk about this outside?"

"My mom's going home late today so we have the house for ourselves," Jennie answered without looking back. They eventually reached the couch area and Jennie pointed to one of the sofas. "Have a seat."

Lisa sat down and settled her orange juice at the coffee table in front. To her dismay, Jennie sat across her.

"So, what brings you here?" Jennie started immediately.

Lisa glanced first at the empty space on her left. "Uh.. d-don't you want to sit beside me first?"

"No."

"Why?"

"I just don't want to."

"Are you mad at me?"

"Mmm, no."

"Then can I sit beside you instead?" asked Lisa, smiling, hoping it would work.

"No way," Jennie scowled. "Can't we just talk like this?"

"We can, but we didn't have a good outcome the last time we talked like this. Maybe we should sit beside each other now for good measures?" said Lisa, flashing out the most charming smile she could do.

Jennie snorted and looked away.

"Oh, come on, Jen. I came here because I was worried about you and this is how you'll entertain me, your VISITOR?"

"Why exactly do you want me to sit beside you?" asked Jennie, more irritated this time.

"Because I missed you, okay? If you're not mad at me then why don't you sit here?" said Lisa, tapping a hand on her side. "Besides, I deserve better hospitality, right?"

"Ugh..." Jennie rolled her eyes. She got up eventually and sat beside Lisa, making sure that there is ample space between them. "Happy now?"

"Of course." Lisa took a sip at her orange juice first before turning to Jennie. "But what's with this?" she asked, staring at the space in between them.

"I'm not avoiding you I just want some space for myself here."

"Jeez. Why are you acting like you don't want to see me?"

"Because I really don't want to see you. I don't even want to talk to you."

"Hah, you don't want to talk to me but then you still let me in your house and prepared me an orange juice? Is that it?" said Lisa, raising the glass and drinking from it.

Jennie grunted once again and rubbed her face with her hands in irritation.

Lisa chuckled as she puts down her juice. "Hey, you're being grumpy again.." she said, touching Jennie's arm.

"Don't touch me," said Jennie, pulling her arm. "I swear I'm gonna move back there if you touch me again."

"Okay, okay. I'll behave," said Lisa, raising her hands in surrender. "Why don't you want to talk to me? Have I done something wrong?"

Jennie shrugged in response and looked away.

Lisa realized that she should take it in a different approach. "Hey, why don't we play a game instead?"

Jennie shot her a glare. "Game? I thought you wanted to talk?"

"Well, you said you don't want to talk to me, right?"

"Ugh... I don't have time for this, Lisa."

"Well, this isn't just the ordinary game. Remember your game we played in the resort before, the 'answer a question with a question'?"

Jennie raised an eyebrow. "You're not serious about this, are you?"

"I am. Unless you're afraid you'd lose then we can cancel it."

"You wish," Jennie scoffed. "Let me remind you that you were the one who lost the last time, remember?"

"I just don't want to embarrass you, honey," Lisa snickered. "So, what, are you game or not? Same consequences, okay?"

Jennie glared at her again, eventually giving in. "Fine. You start this time."

"With pleasure, with pleasure!" said Lisa, rubbing her palms again. She turned her body away for a second and looked up the ceiling while thinking about what to ask. "Hmm, seriously, are you mad at me?"

Jennie brought her feet up to the sofa and supported her head with her left hand. "Do I have any reason to be mad at you?"

"Mmm, but why did you leave the party early last night?"

"I told you, I was not feeling well, right? I wasn't at work today, remember?"

Lisa nodded. "By not feeling well, does it mean you're physically sick or emotionally?"

"What are you trying to point out, Lisa?"

"You saw it, right?"

"Saw what?"

"This kiss?"

"Yeah, so?"

Lisa felt Jennie suddenly getting uncomfortable. "I was wondering, does that have anything to do with you leaving the party early?"

Jennie scoffed and looked away. "Where did you get that notion?"

"Hasn't your friend Rosé told you that she confronted me about it last night?"

Jennie's eyes widened in shock and embarrassment. "A-are you kidding me?"

"Do I look like I'm kidding?"

"W-what exactly did she say to you?"

"Is it true that you cried?"

Jennie massaged her temples with her hands. She then glanced at Lisa before saying, "If so, then what?"

"Why were you crying?"

"Can we please not talk about this, Lisa?"

"Don't you think this is the perfect time to talk about it?"

"Are you..." Jennie paused, tilting her head to Lisa, "Are you just doing this because Rosé asked you to?"

"Can't the reason be because I just want to clear things up with you?"

Jennie narrowed her eyes. "What do you want to tell me exactly?"

"Would you believe me if I say that what you saw last night was a fake kiss?"

"Huh? Is there even a thing such as fake kiss?"

"Yeah, they do it in movies, right?" said Lisa, pointing at the spot where Krystal kissed her.

"Are you trying to tell me that you faked kissed each other?"

Lisa nodded. "Were you really affected with it?"

"Why are you still asking me that if Rosé had told you everything?"

"Then tell me, why were you jealous, huh?" asked Lisa, nudging Jennie.

Instead of answering, Jennie stared at Lisa without saying anything. Somehow, it made Lisa feel uncomfortable. That eye contact made her feel

all the pain that Jennie has been bottling inside. Those swollen eyes gave her an idea what the girl in front of her went through last night.

"Why are you doing this to me, Lisa?" asked Jennie. "Why do you keep on making me feel special for one second, then treat me like a total stranger for another second, and now making me feel again like I mean everything to you?"

The mood has changed. Lisa felt nervous. She can't read what's on Jennie's mind. She's not even sure if this talk will end well or not.

"I wasn't happy avoiding you before, okay? Is having Taehyung around not enough reason for me to stay away from you?" asked Lisa.

"You were jealous of Taehyung? Then what were you doing with Krystal?"

"She was trying to be a good friend to me, she wanted to make you jealous; don't you still get it?"

Jennie swallowed something in her throat. "So, you're not together?"

Lisa shook her head. "Did you seriously think I'd forget you that easy?"

Jennie slumped her back on the chair and started fiddling with her own fingers. She glanced at Lisa and took a deep breath. "I guess there's no point in denying it now, right?"

"I went here because I want to fix this, to fix us, don't you believe me?"

Jennie sighed. "There's no turning back after this so before it's too late, tell me now, are you.. are you really serious about me?"

Lisa knows that this talk is either a make or a break. She should let all her cards out now. Lisa scooted closer, filling the empty space between them.

"What do you want me to do to prove that I am?" asked Lisa, brushing Jennie's hair behind her ear with a hand.

Jennie looked like she's trying her best not to cry. She slowly turned to Lisa with those sweet puppy eyes. "Could you please make sure you'll stay by my side always?"

Lisa melted at that. She couldn't fight her feelings anymore. She leaned forward to kiss Jennie's temple. "I would," she assured, "but on one condition.. would you be officially mine?"

Jennie, who's almost about to cry, wasn't able to hold off a smile after hearing that. "What took you so long to ask?"

Feeling relieved, Lisa anchored her arms around Jennie's waist and guided the latter's head to her neck. "Weren't you the one who took so long to realize it?" she said, kissing the top of Jennie's head.

Feeling embarrassed, Jennie slapped Lisa's arm. "I hate you... I hate you..."

Lisa laughed at that. "I love you too."

"You're so mean. You made me cry last night," Jennie whined like a little child while rubbing an eye.

"I know, I know.. I'm sorry, honey, I'm so sorry.." said Lisa, rubbing a hand on Jennie's arm. "So, does this mean we're officially together now?"

Jennie pulled herself back to look at Lisa's face. "It only means that you should stop flirting with other girls in the office, capiche?"

"Oh, come on, Jennie, you're the only girl in the office that I've flirted with..."

Jennie glared at her. "Make me cry again like last night, I promise you'll be flirting in the hell after."

"Oooh, my baby is scary..."

"Baby your face," Jennie scoffed, leaning back against Lisa's neck.

"Hey, you're forgetting something..."

"What?"

"You lost, honey..."

Jennie pulled back once again, bringing her fingers to her lips. "Oh. I guess I forgot that one. So, what's the consequence?"

"A dinner out tonight would be fine."

"Oh, is that it? That's easy."

Not just tonight, but tomorrow, and the day after, and the day after that, and the day after that day, and the mmm-mmm-mmm." Lisa's voice muffled after Jennie covered her mouth with both hands.

"I'd love to," said Jennie, removing her hands after Lisa shut up.

Lisa stared at Jennie for long while gently brushing the tiny hair off the latter's face. Lisa leaned over to plant another kiss on Jennie's forehead.

"I love you."

Jennie closed her eyes at the touch. "I love you too."

Sleepover

The next day...

As what was told in the news, the low pressure area will bring scattered rain showers throughout the weekend. Because of the rainy morning, Jennie's mom decided to drive her to the office today to save her from the hassles of commuting, making her the first member of their team to come in that day.

She turned on her PC without bothering to look at their IM because she knows that Lisa hasn't arrived yet. Apparently, Lisa woke up a bit late today. They had a long call last night, which happened after getting home late from their dinner date.

Jennie pulled out her phone to reread a message from Lisa thirty minutes ago: *Driving now. See you later. I love you!*

Jennie covered her mouth to try suppressing a squeal from escaping her throat. Up until this moment, she can't bring herself to believe that they are together now, that Lisa is hers, that out of the numerous fan girls in the office it is her who had caught the latter's attention.

"I guess that smile means you're okay now."

A cold voice from behind startled her. Jennie was so high up in clouds that she didn't notice Rosé is already looking over her shoulders.

"Is that Lisa?" asked Rosé, walking back to her table to put her bag down.

Instead of confirming Jennie glared at her friend. "I'm still mad at you, do you know that?"

"Mad at me for what?"

"For telling Lisa."

"Oh, that. So, she really went to your place yesterday? Shouldn't you be thanking me instead?"

"But you told her everything.. and it's so embarrassing..."

Rosé chuckled. "So, did you two talk about what happened?"

"Yes, and we're okay now."

"Okay like..?"

"Just.. okay.."

"Will you spill out more details?"

Jennie tried to recall how exactly the talk went but her mind jumped on what happened during their dinner date, and even on their phone talk that made her giggle in delight numerous times on her bed last night.

"Oh. My. Gosh. I know that face, Jennie, I know that face," said Rosé, pointing a finger.

Jennie, who didn't realize that she was already smiling, immediately pursed her lips. "What?"

Rosé bent down in front of Jennie to hold her hand. "Tell me, can I squeal now?"

"S-squeal for what...?"

"Well, you said you two are okay, right? Does that mean that she already knows you love her?"

"Y-yes..."

"And you know that she loves you too, right?"

"Mmm-mmm."

Rosé held Jennie's hand tightly. "So are you guys together now?"

Jennie looked at her friend with a coy smile. Thinking about the revelation yesterday still sends giddy feelings all over her body. She knows there's no need to hide it now, besides Rosé has the right to know about it because she helped in settling the issue over. Jennie finally gave a nod to confirm it.

"Yes, officially together since yesterday."

And Rosé really did squeal.

Jennie decided to get her morning coffee after that short talk with Rosé. She is passing by the elevator area when the lift door opened, revealing Lisa from behind.

"Hey," Lisa greeted right away, walking towards Jennie.

For the first time in her life, Jennie doesn't know how to greet someone. She knows that a simple "hi" would do however a part in her wants to run and embrace the approaching person. She was thankful that her brain is functioning well at the moment, keeping her sane and reminding her that they are in the office.

"Hi," Jennie answered back, tucking her hair behind her ear.

I swear I shouldn't be nervous like a teenager anymore, right?

Lisa pulled her bag straps over her shoulders and coyly whispered, "I missed you."

The urge to wrapped her arms around Lisa is kicking again; Jennie hugged herself instead. "We were together just last night, right?"

"I know, but I still miss my baby..."

"You're crazy."

"I'm crazy about you."

Jennie playfully hit Lisa's arm. "I didn't know you have this mushy side."

Lisa chuckled. "You don't like mushy?"

"I can handle mushy as long as we're not doing it here in the elevator area where all the employees are passing by."

"Right, right."

"Where's your necklace?"

Lisa pulled out the thing inside her shirt to show it. "Did you think I'd forget to wear this?"

"No, but I'm just making sure that you wear it out now."

"Hmm? Really? What's with the sudden change of mind?"

Jennie folded her arms across her chest. "Nothing. Just letting your fangirls know that you belong to somebody else now. Tell them to talk to me if they are having issues with it."

Lisa's mouth formed an 'O' shape. "Ooh. Wow. You look hot when you're possessive." she whispered, nudging Jennie a little. "I like it."

"I'm serious, okay?"

"I know, I know."

"It's almost 8 o'clock now, Lisa. I suggest that instead of flirting here early in the morning you better log into your PC now or else you'll be tagged as late."

"Yes, boss." Lisa said enthusiastically, matching with a straight body and a salute.

Jennie laughed at it. "I'm serious, Lisa. It's already 7:59," she said, showing the time on her wristwatch.

"Oh shit, I really should go now. See you later, honey," whispered Lisa, patting Jennie's head.

Jennie watched as Lisa disappear from her sight. She smiled and shook her head before resuming her steps to the pantry.

If I knew I'd be this happy I shouldn't have denied this for long.

Office romance isn't an issue in their company if the two employees involved aren't from the same department. Since Jennie doesn't want to make an issue out of it especially to the fan girls, they've decided to keep it low-key. They aren't keeping it a secret but they have no plans of announcing it to everyone either. Excited Rosé and Suho couldn't help but feel glad and sad at the same time knowing that Jennie, their baby, has finally grown up.

It was Friday afternoon the same week. Lisa and Jennie are still in the parking lot, discussing where to have dinner this time.

"Why don't we go to your aunt Yaya's restaurant?" Jennie suggested.

"I want to but it's gonna be a long drive," said Lisa, slumping over the steering wheel. "I'm kind of tired, Jennie. Aside from the distance, I'm sure there'll be heavy traffic because it's been raining the entire day."

Jennie stretched out a hand to Lisa's nape. "Are you feeling alright? Is your head aching?"

"It's just lack of sleep. Someone had been keeping me up late since Tuesday."

Jennie raised an eyebrow. "What, so you don't like talking to me?" She was about to pull her hand but Lisa grabbed it.

"Hey, I'm just kidding, okay?" said Lisa, kissing the back of Jennie's hand.

Jennie still managed to pull her hand away. "Hmp. If you don't want to stay up late then go find someone who will not talk to you every night."

"Hey, are you seriously mad at me?"

"Hmp. Don't talk to me."

Lisa chuckled. She poked Jennie playfully on the arm. "Hey, baby, stop being grumpy or else..."

"Or else what?"

"Or else... I'll kiss you.."

Jennie turned to Lisa with a deadpan look. "Some kind of a threat there?"

"Well, it is a threat for someone who has never been kissed, right?"

"Wow, talking like you're an expert?"

Lisa blinked.

"Unless you lied to me, I believe you and Irene never kissed before, right?" Jennie said with a mocking smile.

"Are you trying to tell me that I can't do it?"

Jennie raised her palms up. "That didn't come from me."

"Hah, are you challenging me? I can give you a lip-lock right here, right now if you want."

Jennie snorted, expressing her skepticism.

Without further ado, Lisa leaned forward in a swift to bring their faces closer. Victory sparkled in her eyes when she noticed Jennie unconsciously moved back in defense.

"What? Afraid of me?" asked Lisa, smirking.

"N-no," said Jennie, looking away, blushing. "I just didn't expect that."

"You've challenged the wrong person, honey."

"Oh really? Is it normal for your heart to beat that fast? I can literally hear it, honey."

The two engaged in staring contest until Lisa gave in. She eventually pulled back with a defeated smile. She knows Jennie is right. She's freaking nervous.

"Admit it to yourself, Lisa, you just can't do it."

"You're lucky that I deemed this place inappropriate for our first kiss," said Lisa, finally starting the car engine. She pointed a finger at Jennie. "Come that time you'll be in trouble, young lady."

Jennie chuckled at that. "Okay, if you say so. So where are we going?"

"I don't know. Is there any specific food you'd like to eat tonight?"

"Why don't you cook dinner for me this time?"

"You mean at my place?"

"Yeah. While watching a movie?"

"Sounds great. But what time should you be home?"

"Who says I'm going home? I'll sleep over there."

A smile broke out across Lisa's face. "This is going to be fun."

They bought some ingredients first from the supermarket before heading to the apartment.

Although everything looks organized and clean, nothing has changed since the last time Jennie's been there; the couch is in the same position. The furniture are still placed at the same exact place Jennie had seen them before.

Lisa went straight to the kitchen with the grocery bags. She filled up a glass with water and puts it on the counter. "Thirsty?"

"Oh, thanks." Jennie walked towards the kitchen and drinks from the glass. Her eyes roamed around the area, unconsciously starting to think what she should do to redecorate the place. "This place could use some colors, Lisa."

Lisa was busy arranging the ingredients on the counter. "Ah, yeah? Feel free to redesign it."

"You've been living here for years and you haven't thought of adding some decorations or so?"

Lisa shook her head while washing her hands in the faucet. "Interior designing isn't my thing, Jennie. It's boring."

"It isn't boring. You are boring." Jennie mocked, putting down the glass. "Your apartment looks boring because of you."

Lisa snorted as she wipes her hands dry with a cloth. "I'm sorry, what did you say?"

"You ARE boring."

"Oh yeah, really?" said Lisa, dropping the cloth and slowly taking steps towards Jennie, a mischievous grin plastered on her face.

Knowing something's up with her girlfriend's mind, Jennie took a step backward. "Lisa, what are you thinking?"

"Nothing. You wanna see how BORING I am?" Lisa slowly resumes walking step by step, trailing her hand along the counter.

"No, Lisa, no..."

"Why don't we have a little fun so you won't get bored?"

Jennie changes her stance in defense position, taking another step backward. "Lisa.. this is not fun, okay?"

"Boo!"

"Eeeee!" Jennie attempted to flee but her attacker ran after her immediately.
"Lisaaaaaaa!"

"Hahaha! I see the baby wants to play chase, huh?"

"You won't catch me!" Jennie teased, sticking her tongue out.

"Let's see then. Waaaa!"

"Eeeee!"

They eventually reached the couch where they were circling around.

"Lisaaaa! This is not fun anymore!" Jennie exclaimed, still trying her best not to get caught.

"Not until I catch you!" Lisa jumped over the couch and caught Jennie on her waist, the latter screaming and laughing at the same time. "Gotcha!"

"You cheated!" Jennie can't do anything now as Lisa's arms were wrapped around her.

Lisa plonk herself down on the couch along with Jennie who landed on top of her. Both were panting from the little chasing they had.

"Your heart is beating fast," said Jennie, ears against Lisa's chest.

"Yeah, chasing you has always made my heart go crazy."

"You're being mushy again."

"People are mushy when they are in love, honey." said Lisa, caressing Jennie's hair.

Jennie brought her head up to look down at Lisa. "Oh, really?"

They stared for a little while until Lisa couldn't bottle up her admiration for her girlfriend.

"You're so beautiful," said Lisa, leaning forward for a forehead kiss. "I love you."

A sweet smile drew across Jennie's face. "Why do you love me?" she asked, wagging her feet.

"I don't know. Do I need reasons to?"

"Well, not really. Just wondering..."

"How about you, why do you love me?"

Jennie looked away, thinking of what to say. She gave up in the end with a smile. "I don't know either."

"See?" Lisa chuckled. She traced a finger on Jennie's face. "When did you realize that you love me, hmm?"

Jennie scrunched up her face. "Hmm, I'm not really sure. Maybe this Monday, during the party?"

"Just this recently? Seriously?"

"I don't really know. I mean you've always been special to me, I know I've been jealous of your girls ever since, but yeah, I didn't think I was in love at first. How about you? When did you realize that?"

A smile slipped across Lisa's face. "I forgot."

"Ugh, you're not supposed to forget things like that," Jennie retorted, slapping Lisa's arm.

"Haha! I'm just kidding."

"So, when exactly?"

Lisa let out a loud exhale first before saying, "Remember the first time we had breakfast together in the office?"

Jennie looked up trying to recall when it happened. "Mmm, that was last December, right, before the New Year's off?"

Lisa guided Jennie's head to her neck as she hummed to agree. "I went home that day smiling, realizing that I'd fallen for you."

"Wait, you mean you already felt it even before we went to Gampo?"

"Y-yeah..."

"Oh my gosh, Lisa, oh my gosh!"

"What?"

"You took advantage of me in Gampo!"

Lisa laughed. "Oh, come on, I wasn't the one who pushed us to go there, remember?"

"Yeah, but you still managed to score while we were pretending!"

"Hey, the farthest we've done is cuddling in front of Irene and Kyungsoo, okay? And let me remind you that pretending wasn't my idea," said Lisa. "If I had known better I think you liked me long before we've actually flirted."

"Yah! Conceited!"

Lisa quickly steals a cheek kiss from Jennie. "Mmm! You're so cute."

Jennie blushed at that. She leaned forward to kiss Lisa's brow, cheek, and then chin. Jennie buried her face back into Lisa's neck. "Can we cuddle like this for a little while?"

"How come you kissed my face yet avoided my lips?"

"I'm afraid I might be bad at it."

"Impossible. Want to practice on me?"

Jennie looked up and saw Lisa already looking at her. She immediately flashed after noticing the smile on Lisa's lips. She buried her face back down again. "I don't want to disappoint you..."

"Oh, you surely won't. Come on, look at me," said Lisa, lifting Jennie's chin and gazing into her eyes.

"S-should we really do it now?"

"Don't you want to?"

"Umm..." Jennie looked up the ceiling. "I'm feeling a bit conscious because your lights are too bright."

Lisa smiled and traced a finger on Jennie's lips. "Excuses." Out of nowhere, she felt Jennie's stomach growls against hers. "The kiss can wait but your stomach can't. Let me get up now to prepare something for my baby."

"But I still want to cuddle," said Jennie, tightening her hug.

"We can cuddle all night long, honey. Let me just prepare you my masterpiece recipe."

"And that is?"

"Boiled eggs. Perfectly boiled eggs."

"Wow. That's exquisite."

"And mouthwatering." Lisa winked at her. "Why don't you take a shower first while I prepare food? I'll get you pajamas."

Jennie had always loved a nice hot shower on a cold rainy day. She felt her stress being washed off by the warm water. She can't take the smile off her face while listening to the sizzle of the pan from the kitchen.

Eeeee! I still can't believe that this is happening!

Couch

Jennie went out to dry herself in front of the mirror, eventually noticing the reflection of a room behind. Is it the same room with pictures before. Jennie went in and turned on the lights; getting surprised because even though nothing has changed in Lisa's apartment, a lot has changed in this room.

All the pictures have been rearranged. There are also additional pictures from Lisa's Gampo and Bali trip. But above all that, what really caught Jennie's attention is the new picture frame in the center. It wasn't Irene anymore. Irene's frame has been placed on the side. This time the picture of a woman --- although not looking at the camera --- that has a heart melting smile drawn on her face. The shot was taken in a beach-like background.

"Jennie?"

Jennie turned around and saw Lisa already peeking from the door.

"Oh, umm..." Lisa lightly scratched her eyebrow, somewhat embarrassed at what Jennie had seen. "The, uh, food is ready..."

"What's this, Lisa?"

"Umm, a picture.. of you..?"

"And why do you have a picture of me hanging in here?"

Getting more embarrassed at the situation, Lisa hugged Jennie from behind around her waist and kissed the side of her head. "Uhm, well, don't I have the right to put my girlfriend's picture in my room?"

Jennie smiled as she looks back at her picture. "Since when was this displayed here?"

"Right after the Gampo trip."

"Seriously?"

"Yeah. I can't resist putting that picture there. Your smile is so charming and radiant. It is a perfect shot."

Jennie turned to look at her picture again, holding Lisa's face with her hand.

"I always love seeing your sweet gummy smile, Jennie. Always."

"And you always give me another reason to fall for you even more," said Jennie, turning to Lisa.

"Of course. Making you fall out of love is the last thing I have in mind now. I just hope there won't be a need for me to change that picture again anymore."

Jennie held Lisa's face with both her hands and looked at her sweetly.

"Don't worry, you won't."

After dinner (which is not boiled eggs by the way), the couple settled on the couch to watch a romantic comedy film. Jennie is sitting upright with Lisa's head comfortably resting on her lap. She is getting carried away with the movie, noticing that Lisa has already dozed off. She wouldn't have found out until she asked a question that the latter didn't respond to.

"Lisa!"

Lisa woke up after Jennie jiggled her. "W-what?"

"Are you seriously going to sleep on me?"

"No, I'm not, I just ---" Lisa got up after she noticed Jennie is already pouting. "Oh, I'm sorry. I was too tired, plus your hand on my head is very relaxing."

"Hmp. If I'd known you're just going to sleep early I should've gone home instead."

Lisa wrapped an arm around Jennie. "No. I'm not going to sleep yet. We're going to stay up late watching movies, right?"

"Hmp. Admit it. You just don't like the movie I picked."

Lisa couldn't answer. She's never a fan of chick flicks. But since Jennie was too excited to watch it earlier, Lisa agreed right away. She just didn't think that she'll get bored with it, and worse it put her to sleep.

"I-It's not that I don't like it," Lisa reasoned out, "I was having a terrible headache earlier. I guess I felt relieved after you massaged my head."

Jennie twitched her mouth in annoyance but gave in eventually. "Are you feeling okay now?" she asked, bringing the back of her hand on Lisa's forehead.

"Yeah, the power nap did the trick, and of course your massage."

"Oh, that's a relief." Jennie dropped her hand, making her big shirt getting pulled down low on one side, exposing her bare shoulder and collarbone.

"Oh, sexy..."

"Sexy what?"

"What's this?" Lisa leaned over to kiss the exposed shoulder. "Trying to seduce me?"

"Perv." Jennie rolled her eyes. She pulled her shirt back and fixed it so it wouldn't fall. "Why would I seduce you?"

"I don't know. You always had a sexy and evil plan towards me, right?"

Jennie scoffed at the allegation. "You're the one who gave this shirt, remember? You're the one with an evil plan here."

"And what's that plan?" Lisa pulled Jennie closer and whispered in her ear. "Like woo-hoo?"

"Woo-hoo your face." Jennie deadpanned, slapping Lisa. "You don't even know how to kiss yet you're thinking of woo-hoo already? Gosh, Lisa, gosh."

Lisa laughed. "Did you seriously think I'd want to do that now?"

"Well, you looked like a psychopath maniac just a while ago."

Lisa laughed again, louder this time. Then she wrapped her arms tightly around her girlfriend. "Those things could wait. Believe me or not but holding you close like this is enough for me now."

Jennie pulled back to give a sweet contented smile. She reached up and kissed the tip of Lisa's nose. "Me too."

"Could you tell me why you keep on kissing me but you keep on avoiding my lips?" asked Lisa, narrowing her eyes.

Jennie just flashed out a coy smile as an answer and hid her face in the warm crook of Lisa's neck.

They turned their attention back to the movie. Lisa still finds the scene uninteresting because the lead characters were just exchanging corny lines with each other. But just when she thought it wouldn't get any better, just when she thought she had completely lost interest, her eyes were suddenly glued to the film after the male lead grabbed his girl by the waist and kissed her tenderly. The kiss eventually became passionate as the characters continued to make out under the full moon.

Lisa's throat dried up. This is the first time she felt uneasy watching a kissing scene. It's not because it's a bad kiss or what, but it is because she felt her girlfriend's body stiffened against hers.

As if on cue, they both look at each other at the same time, making them feel totally awkward.

Truth is Lisa's been thinking of kissing Jennie the moment they got together. She's not just pushing it because Jennie might not be ready for it

yet, and she wants to take things slow for now. Although the other *things* could wait to happen sometime in the future, but yeah, the thought of kissing those voluptuous lips had never left Lisa's imagination since day one.

When she couldn't take it anymore, Lisa decided to stand up. She needs to fight the urge for now because she doesn't want to force Jennie into it.

"Um.. uh... I uh... I'm gonna get us some snacks. What would you like me to get you?"

"Hmm... I'd prefer gummy bears if you have..."

"Alright. Be back in a while."

"Lisa?"

"Yes?"

"Could you.. turn off the lights when you get back?"

Lisa's mouth fell open. She stood frozen at her spot, suddenly being paralyzed by the jolts that run through her spine.

D-did she just give me the green light?

Lisa started fidgeting and feeling nervous about it. It may be not that obvious because she's being cocky all the time but she is as equally as inexperienced as Jennie about these type of things. She started getting worried if she could even do it properly.

"Uh, yeah, sure," Lisa confirmed. She walked out of the area and gritted her teeth.

Lisa head straight to the fridge without knowing what exactly she needs to get. She took out a pitcher, quickly filled a glass full and drank it straight to the bottom.

She placed both hands on the counter and leaned the top of her body over, staring at Jennie who's still busy watching the movie.

She's giving me signs, right? She never said she didn't want to kiss, she just said she's afraid she might be bad at it.

Lisa clenched her fists thinking if tonight should be the night.

Damn. I shouldn't screw this one!

Lisa went back with some snacks and sweets in a bowl, making sure to turn off the lights before sitting beside her girlfriend. Jennie leaned her tiny frame against Lisa and puts her head on the latter's shoulder.

"How are you feeling?" asked Lisa, feeding Jennie a gummy bear.

Jennie wrapped her arms around Lisa's waist, still occupied with the movie. "Just fine."

It was dark all over the place. Lisa stared at Jennie noticing how her skin color is changing each time the camera angle shifts in the movie. She's no longer in the mood to watch. Seeing Jennie getting amused is a far better view compared to the movie itself.

Lisa is starting to feel light-headed. She's not sure if it's because of the romantic ambiance that hangs around the room or if it's because of the calming sound of the rain outside. What's clear to her now is she's already bombarded with the thought that this is the perfect moment for them to kiss.

Lisa leaned down to plant a kiss on Jennie's head, making the latter look up to give her a quick sweet smile and look back at the movie after.

"I love you," Lisa whispered, hoping that it was heard.

Jennie looked back to her. "I love you too."

"No, I'm seriously in love with you.." said Lisa, putting down the bowl on the table.

A confused chuckle escaped Jennie's throat upon noticing Lisa's odd mood. "Are you alright?"

"Mmm-mmm. Come here, check this out," said Lisa, guiding Jennie's head over her heart.

Jennie's eyes widened after she felt Lisa's shallow breath and fast heartbeat through her shirt. "Lisa, what's wrong?"

"It's nothing, don't worry..."

"No, you're not fine." Jennie brought a hand to touch Lisa's forehead. "My gosh, Lisa, you're cold!"

Lisa caged Jennie's hand in between hers. "Hey, don't worry. I'm fine, I really am..."

"Are you sure?"

"Y-yeah, I'm just.. just nervous.."

"N-nervous? W-why?"

"Uhm.. because..."

Instead of finishing her sentence, Lisa reached up to touch the smooth skin of Jennie's temple, letting her hand slide down to the cheek. The light illuminating from the TV helped her see Jennie's face amidst the darkness.

Slowly, so damn slowly, Lisa leaned towards Jennie in hesitation, making sure it was okay to kiss her. She moved gradually until she could feel Jennie's breath lightly on her face. Lisa's whole body is shivering and her breath is shaking. She knows she needs to do this now otherwise she'll surely regret it for not even trying.

As if the stars were all conspiring to make it happen tonight, Jennie gave the most sensuous response by closing her eyes in assent.

That's when Lisa felt like her heart is going to explode. She closed her eyes and readied herself for what's going to happen next.

It's too late to turn back.

Lisa let her feelings took over as she finally closed the gap between their lips.

... ..

... ..

... ..

Aside from the sound of the rainfall echoing outside and the dialogue in the movie, the silence continued to drift between them. Nobody moved. Both were trapped in a state where everything is wonderful and dreamy.

Lisa felt a tingling sensation all over her body. Her mind ceased functioning for a time being. It's one of the purest moments she had experienced in her entire life.

Jennie's lips were velvet smooth; it felt soft and squishy, wet and warm. Lisa never knew that it's possible for someone to feel lost and complete at the same time.

When she finally filled herself with Jennie's fragrance and softness, Lisa slowly pulled back, enough to part their lips and gaze upon her girlfriend. But before Lisa could even take a full breath in, Jennie drag her head back in a swift to press their lips again. This time it wasn't simple. It was a full, committed kiss; no hesitation, no reservation. It was slow and gentle. There is tenderness as their lips are being pressed together time after time.

Lisa doesn't know how they're doing it but she knows they're doing it right. They started to have their own rhythm as they kept squeezing each other's lips. She felt so much closer to Jennie because of it.

They slowly pulled away after a minute and leaned against each other's forehead. Jennie's hands were still holding Lisa's face; their eyes are aligned

but both looking down. There was silence while the two were feeling slight awkwardness.

"Did I do it right?" asked Jennie, concerned.

"I... I think you were amazing," said Lisa, pulling back to look at her girlfriend.

"I think it's addictive." said Jennie, leaning forward for a quick peck on the lips.

"Really? I was thinking that you're not ready for this yet. If I had known I should've done this earlier."

Jennie pinched Lisa's nose. "It's because you're slow."

"Who's slow, huh?" said Lisa, squeezing Jennie's ribcage, making the latter squeal 'you'. "What did you say, huh? What did you say?"

"Stop! Stop!" Jennie's combined laughter and screams echoed in the room. She grabbed Lisa's hands and wrapped it around her waist to save herself from more tickling. "In case you've forgotten, this wouldn't happen if I hadn't wake you up."

"I wasn't sleeping, okay? I just dozed off for a while."

"Hmm. I practically gift wrapped myself to you and you were just planning to sleep on me? Ugh."

Lisa raised an eyebrow at the newfound information. "Wow. So, you really planned this?"

"Not really planned, but yeah, I'll be sure to be mad at you if you won't kiss me tonight."

"Haha! You should have told me that directly."

"And why would I do that? Shouldn't you be the one who'll make the move first?" Jennie scowled, rolling her eyes. "I am still the woman in this

relationship, remember?"

"Of course, I know that, princess," said Lisa, pulling Jennie for another kiss. It's more relaxed more natural this time.

"Why are you smiling?" asked Jennie in between their kisses.

Lisa pulled back a little. "It's because your lips are sweet."

"Stop the sweet-talking, Manoban."

"No, I'm serious. Your lips are literally sweet. It's like umm..."

"Like?"

"Uh.. cherry?" said Lisa, not even sure of herself. She glanced at the bowl on the table. "Is it because of the gummy bears?"

Jennie laughed. "Cherry? Oh gosh. No, it's not the gummy bears, honey..."

"Then what is it?"

"Remember our project before, the cherry-flavored edible lipstick?"

Lisa's jaw dropped.

"I bought one before we went to Gampo remember? I'm still using that until now."

Lisa brought a hand to her face in amazement. "Wow. Just wow."

"Hmm-hmm. So, I guess it really does taste like cherry. You like it?"

"Are you kidding? Like is hardly the word for it," said Lisa, leaning over and pausing halfway to smile, "it just make me crave for more."

The soothing sound of the steady rain outside is calming Lisa into a deep, relaxing slumber. She knew it's morning but there's no way she's going out of bed early. She felt Jennie curled up beside her, back pressed against her chest, her head comfortably resting on Lisa's arm. Lisa spooned her closer by tenderly covering Jennie's waist with her other arm. She rested her chin against the top of her girlfriend's head and smiled as the rhythm of the rainfall lulled her back to sleep.

Ring.. ring.. ring..

Lisa doesn't know who's phone is ringing but she knows it's definitely not hers. She didn't mind it knowing that it'll stop soon. She's not even sure if it's real or if she's just dreaming until she felt a weight was lifted from her body. Jennie sat up in bed to answer the phone, leaving Lisa feeling a little cold now.

"Hello? Ah, yes..."

Lisa felt Jennie stood up to walk out of the room. Lisa forcibly opened her eyes just to get a glimpse of Jennie's back with her blouse pulled down again on one side, exposing her shoulder. Lisa smiled at the view but is immediately sent back to dreamland.

Lisa doesn't know how long the call took. After some time, she felt a movement on Jennie's side of the bed. And then out of nowhere a body landed on top of her.

"Wake up, wake up, wake up..."

Lisa felt her world shaking as Jennie wiggles her head. "Ummm..."

"Honey, wake up now." said Jennie again, giving a quick cheek kiss.

"Uhh.. why is the baby up so early?" Lisa grunted, bringing her arms around Jennie's waist.

"It's not early anymore; it's already nine in the morning, honey."

"But I'm still sleepy..."

"Get up now and take a shower, we're going out."

Lisa is too sleepy to even think of doing something now. "I will if you're gonna take a shower with me."

Jennie smiled broadly as her palm playfully landed on Lisa's cheek. "Perv."

Lisa laughed at that, decreasing her sleepiness a bit. "It's too early to go out, baby. Can we just do it by lunch? I still want to sleep..."

"It can't wait. You need to dress up now because we need to go somewhere."

Lisa creased her brows. "Where?"

"My mom called. She said she'll cook lunch for us. She wants to meet you today."

"What?!"

And she is sleepy no more.

Deal

"Do we really have to do it now?"

"Ugh, Lisa, how many times should I tell you that it was her who invited you here?" asked Jennie, obviously irritated now. Can't blame her. They've been in front of Jennie's house for ten minutes now but Lisa doesn't want to go out of the car yet.

"But.. but Rosé said ----"

"My mom knows about us, okay? She might not be really into this type of relationship but we've already talked about it. She approved it. That's why she wants to meet you."

Lisa let out a loud exhale, her eyes uncomfortably glancing at the house. She still can't believe that she'll be meeting Jennie's mom sooner than she had expected.

"Are you really planning to be in a relationship with me and keep hiding from my mom?" asked Jennie.

"It's not like that, Jen," said Lisa, reaching for Jennie's hand. "I'm just nervous. I don't want to disappoint her. I don't want to disappoint you."

Jennie cupped Lisa's cheek with her palm. "You won't, okay? Just don't try to act like someone else you're not. You're charming, use that. Charm your way up to get my mom."

A relieved smile curved on Lisa's lips as she exhaled a sigh. "I love you."

"I love you too."

"Can we stay here for five more minutes?"

"Unfortunately, we can't, Lisa," said Jennie, fixing her bag. "Unless you want to get in trouble by giving my mom an idea that the reason we arrived late is because we woo-hoo, then I guess we could stay here even for thirty minutes more."

"What?! We didn't do that!"

Jennie laughed. "But the longer we stay here the more she'll get an idea about it. So, let's go out now, okay?"

Lisa knew there's no way out now. She finally nodded.

The house is brighter inside now compared to the last time Lisa visited. All the curtains were opened, giving the place a lively aura. Lisa smelled something cooking in the kitchen and got nervous when Jennie dragged her there.

"Mom!"

Lisa saw a slim figure who turned around to greet her daughter with a smile.

"Hey, dear, I missed you," Jennie's mom said, kissing her cheek.

Seeing the older lady made Lisa realize where Jennie had gotten all her charms. And to be honest, they look more like sisters than mom and daughter.

Jennie wrapped her arms around her mom's waist. "I missed you too. I'm sorry for the unplanned sleepover last night."

"Is there anything else I can do? I guess I'd have to get used to you sleeping over somebody's place more often now," Jennie's mom said, glancing over Lisa.

Jennie went over to Lisa and drag her closer. "Mom, this is Lisa. And Lisa, meet my mom."

Jennie's mom raised an eyebrow while staring at Lisa.

Lisa gulped at that. Now she's certain where Jennie got her snobbishness. The lady in front of her is the queen of terror. She doesn't know what to say so she held her hand out for a handshake.

"Uh.. h-hi.. ma'am.."

Unknown to the two youngsters, Jennie's mom is holding a knife in her right hand, which she put down on the counter beside Lisa to shake hands.

"So, we finally meet, Lalisa."

Lisa swallowed down a lump in her throat and forced a smile. "It's.. it's nice to meet you, ma'am."

"Aunt, just call me aunt. You can freely call me that as long as you take good care of my Jennie, okay?" said the older lady, grabbing the knife again.

Lisa pressed her lips together and nodded. "I... I surely will."

Out of the blue, Jennie chuckled. "Mom, will you drop that? You're scaring her."

And in just a snap the older lady's face shifted from a killer to a sweet angel now. She put down the knife and said, "I'm just kidding, okay? It's really my pleasure to finally meet you, Lalisa. Now give me a hug."

Lisa hesitated first but the sweet smile on Jennie's mom's face is as irresistible as her daughter's. She hugged the lady. "Pleasure is mine, ma'am."

Jennie's mom pulled back and raised an eyebrow. "Didn't I just tell you to call me aunt?"

"Ahhh, yeah.. sorry.. aunt.." Lisa stuttered as she absently scratched her head.

"I have to admit you smell nice, huh?" the older lady said, still with her terror eyebrows raised.

Lisa feigned a smile, unsure of how to respond.

"Make sure my daughter's home every day before 10 pm, okay? And please let her have dinner with me at least twice or thrice a week."

"Mom ----"

The older woman turned to her daughter. "You're still my only baby, Jennie. Of course, I still want to see you here often. I think Lisa here agrees on that too, right?"

Lisa nodded right away, completely understanding the point. "Don't worry. I'll make sure of that."

"Anyway, you guys can have dinner here as often as you like. I actually prefer that."

Lisa glanced at Jennie and saw her smiling back at her. "That would be great, ma --- I mean.. aunt.."

Jennie went closer to loop an arm through Lisa's. "And Lisa is a great cook, mom. We can have her cook for us even every night, right?"

"Yeah, yeah, it'll be my pleasure to serve you both," said Lisa.

"Oh, thank goodness..." Jennie's mom brought her hands to her temples. "At least we could save ourselves from the troubles of thinking of what to eat."

Lisa and Jennie chuckled.

The older lady turned to Jennie again. "By the way, you can sleep at her place during weekends only, got it?"

"Mom... I'm not a teenager anymore."

The older lady chuckled at her daughter's expression. "You may not be but you still act like one." She turned to Lisa and said, "But you can sleep here as often as you like."

Jennie couldn't control her happiness. She threw herself to hug her mom. "Eeeee! I love you!"

"I'm not yet done. She'll sleep on the couch."

"Mom!"

"I'm kidding, okay?" Jennie's mom chuckled. "Gosh, I can't believe I have competition with my baby now."

"It's not a competition, okay?" said Jennie, hooking her chin on her mom's shoulder. "Why are you talking like I'm gonna leave you soon?"

"Well, aren't you?"

"No. I won't do that. You're the only family I have. And I'm not leaving you. In fact, I'm just adding another member to the family, right?"

The older lady smiled at Jennie. "Why don't you give us time to talk while you prepare the table for lunch?"

Jennie immediately looked at Lisa to make sure she's okay with it.

"Um, yeah, it's fine with me..." said Lisa.

"Are you sure?" asked Jennie.

Lisa smiles at her. "Don't worry. It's not like your mom's gonna bite me."

"Well, I can, Lisa, I can," the older lady said.

Lisa chuckled at it, feeling a little awkward.

"And I've killed people too before."

"Mom!"

"Kidding..." the older lady said, turning to her daughter. "I'll be gentle. I promise. Now you prepare while Lisa and I will talk in my office."

The lively aura mood suddenly changed into something uncomfortable. Jennie's mom had completely turned into a different person now. Lisa is starting to really get anxious about this talk.

"Take a sit," said Jennie's mom, pointing at the swivel chair. Lisa sat down and watched the older lady leaned her butt against the table. "I'm gonna be quick with this. Are you sure you're not just playing with my daughter's feelings?"

"No, ma'am. I can't do that to her. I care for her as much as she care for me," said Lisa quickly, feeling totally nervous now.

"So, you're saying that you really love her?"

Lisa nodded. "I can prove that if you want."

"And how can you prove it?"

"I... I'll take good care of her.."

"Until when?"

Lisa's mouth opened but she couldn't make out an answer.

"See? That's what I'm talking about." The older lady shook her head. "This type of relationship doesn't really last."

"B-but, ma'am, believe it or not, I'm serious about her."

"I know. I can see it in you, and I can see it in her too. That's the only reason I've allowed her to date you. I've never seen Jennie so into someone like this."

"I... I'd like to thank you for giving as a chance to be together..."

"No, don't thank me yet. Let me make it clear first that I still want my daughter to be married to a man someday."

Lisa looked down, flexing her jaw. She knows she won't be able to win if the argument is about this.

"To be honest I'm seeing this now as a phase in Jennie's life, in your lives," said the older lady. "We can never disregard the possibility that both of you might fall for somebody else in the future, right? Now tell me honestly, until when are you planning to date my daughter?"

"I respect your opinion on the matter, ma'am," said Lisa, trying her best to calm even though it feels like she's being interrogated in court. "However, you also ought to know that Jennie and I are aware that what we're having now isn't momentary."

"I really hope it's not," said Jennie's mom. "My only concern here is my daughter. I can't bear seeing her again crying like last time, which was because of you."

"I am sorry for that, but that was unintentional, ma'am ---"

"I know, I know.. but I'm in me is still worried that you might do it to her again."

"Believe me, that is the last thing I have in mind now," said Lisa, looking at the woman eagerly.

The old lady studied Lisa's face first before she leaned both hands against the table. "Just to let you know, I'm being nice now because this is the first time I've seen my daughter so vibrant and so bubbly. It's like she found a new life and ironically, even if it's because of you, I love seeing her that way. But I have to be honest here and let you know that I still don't like her having this relationship with you."

"I completely understand that," said Lisa, looking down again.

"But as much as I don't want her to be with you I know that I would just hurt her again if I would take her away from you." said Jennie's mom, sighing. "I'm doing this for Jennie because what matters to me is her happiness. And I'm giving you just one chance to prove to me that what you're having now is not just some shitty relationship like the others."

That made Lisa look up.

"I'd like to make a deal with you, Lalisa," the older lady said, shifting her position on the desk, "if you could prove to me that this type of relationship really lasts then I'd be willing to open my mind in accepting this, in accepting you..."

Lisa leaned forward. "How do you want me to prove it to you, ma'am?"

"Simple. Take care of my daughter, make her happy. If she decides to stick with you for good then in return I'll be happy to accept you as part of the family --- given that she won't fall for another guy, okay?" said the older lady, raising a finger. "Because if she does then it only means that there is really no room for relationship like this."

Lisa isn't sure how to respond. She can't deny that there is a possibility that they might fall for somebody else in the future, but that is something she hasn't thought of yet because they've only just begun. Even so, the idea of Jennie wanting to marry a guy someday somehow scared her.

The older lady decided to continue, "But if Jennie chooses to stay with you even after meeting other guys, and you won't break her heart again, then I guess I'd have to believe that you might be really meant for each other."

"I-I won't, I promise I won't hurt her," said Lisa, unconsciously bringing a hand on her chest.

"Don't promise anything now. Just prove it. If you, by any chance, make her cry like last Monday, I swear I wouldn't want to see your shadow around my house ever again."

"Loud and clear, ma'am."

"So, do we have a deal?" asked Jennie's mom, offering her hand.

Lisa sat up to shake the hand. "Thank you, ma'am. Thank you."

"And please stop calling me that." Jennie's mom rolled her eyes. "How many times should I tell you to call me aunt?"

Lisa let out a small chuckle as she rubs her neck out of habit. "I'm sorry. I'm just feeling awkward a while ago...."

"Well, you should be," came the response as the older woman raised an eyebrow at Lisa. Suddenly it shifted to a sweet smile. "Okay, I'm just kidding."

Lisa looked at the woman with a sort of relieved smirk while nodding.

The lady stared at Lisa for a while before saying, "Now I'm starting to understand why Jennie got attracted to you."

"I-I'm sorry?"

"Let's go out now before Jennie gets worried that I might have killed you."

"Oh, okay."

Jennie's mom is a great converser. Lisa enjoyed the lunch even though she was partly interrogated (again). Their lunch was filled with questions about her family and some questions about how she and Jennie met.

After their lunch, the lady allowed the two to have their alone time. Jennie excitedly dragged Lisa into her room like a teenager who brought her first friend in the house.

"What did you guys talk about?" asked Jennie, closing the door behind her.

"Well, it's mostly about us."

Jennie led Lisa to sit on the bed. "What did she say?"

"Mmm. To sum it up, she said that she still doesn't accept me as your lover but she's willing to open her mind if we could prove to her that we could last long --- given that you won't fall for another guy anytime soon," said Lisa.

"What? She said that?"

"Yeah. She specifically wants me to take care of you while you're still in love with me," said Lisa. "She even said that you're the only reason she's nice to me. She can't bear seeing you cry like that again."

Jennie looked away and sighed. "Tsk. Mom..."

"Hey, she's just worried about you."

"I know, and I know that she's really struggling to accept this."

"Well, at least she gave us a chance, right?"

Jennie closed her eyes and leaned her head against Lisa.

"But honestly, I'm a bit worried..." Lisa sighed.

"About?"

"What if you really fall for another guy someday? I bet your mom would be happy to see you walk down the aisle with the right man waiting for you."

"Hey, what are you saying?" said Jennie, pulling herself back.

"I'm not just closing my mind to the possibility that what your mom said might happen...."

"And you're talking like I'm the only one who can do that?"

"I already told you, I have no plans of replacing the picture in my apartment. I'm certain of that, Jennie."

Jennie cupped Lisa's cheeks to turn her face to hers. "And I've no plans to give you reasons to replace that either, okay?"

"I really hope you won't." Lisa smiled faintly. "This is the first time I've felt so attached to someone. This is even stronger than what I had with Irene, and to be honest, it's starting to scare me now."

"Sssh... I'm scared too, you know," said Jennie, closing her eyes and resting her forehead against Lisa's, "But like what they say, it takes two scared people to do one brave thing..."

"And that is?"

"To fall in love."

That had surely made Lisa smile. "Since when did you become a romanticist?"

"Eeee!" Jennie grimaced.

The soft smile remained on Lisa's face as she looks at Jennie with admiration. She touched Jennie's cheek and slowly stroke hairs off her face. "Why are you so beautiful?"

"And why are you such a sweet-talker?" asked Jennie, smiling coyly.

"Why don't you just believe me?"

"And why don't you shut up and kiss me?"

"Hmm..." Lisa traced her thumb against Jennie's lips. "I think that's a good idea."

One chapter to go. ☺

Family

"I always knew that our meeting in Taipei wasn't by accident. We were really meant to meet there for some reasons," said Krystal, pointing a finger at the receipt in front of her.

Lisa looked down carefully at the paper and signed on it. "Whatever, serendipity lover."

Krystal playfully hit her in her arm. "Yah! You wouldn't get Jennie if it wasn't for me, right?"

"And you wouldn't have met Kai if I didn't invite you to the party, right? I know what's your pointing out, Krys. Why are you being so nostalgic?"

"It's because today is my second anniversary of being together with Kai! Have you forgotten that?"

"Oh? Is it really today?" Lisa glanced at her watch to check the date. "Wow. How time really flies, huh? So, are you two going out later or what?"

"We're going on vacation for three days!" Krystal excitedly exclaimed.

"Ah, yeah? Where this time?"

"Singapore."

"So, you're really over Taipei now?"

"Taipei will always have a special place in my heart, Lisa," said Krystal, smiling faintly. "But yeah, I have to move on someday, right?"

"And you've got the right to be happy."

"Exactly."

Lisa stared at Krystal, realizing how special their friendship had become through the years. "I'm happy you're with Kai now, Krys. That dude is a real nice guy."

"You're just saying that because Kai and Jennie didn't end up together."

"You're probably right," said Lisa, chuckling.

"Oh, by the way, Kai kept on complaining how their department got boring since you left them."

"Oh, come on." Lisa slapped her palm on the counter. "I quit my job almost two years ago and he hasn't adapted to it yet?"

"Maybe he just misses you?"

"Or maybe he just misses my visitors before? Aw!" Lisa earned herself a slap from Krystal.

"Kai isn't as flirty as you, Lisa, hmp!"

"He's just good in hiding it," Lisa retorted, rubbing her cheek.

Krystal glared at her.

Unaffected by the glare, Lisa casually leaned her elbows on the counter. "Let's hangout sometime; you and Kai, me and Jennie."

"Sounds good! I think we should do it at least once a month. I rarely see you now after you opened your studio."

Lisa sighed at that. "Yeah, I've been really busy. Dad's putting more pressure on it."

"But at least you know that your business is in good hands, right?"

"Yeah..." Lisa shrugged. "At least I'm doing now what I really wanted to do since then." She felt her phone vibrated in her pocket and checked on it.

"Alright. The queen has already texted me. I need to go now."

Krystal raised an eyebrow. "Queen?"

Lisa chuckled. "Jennie's mom. She said Jennie's in my apartment now and wants me to surprise her."

"Wow. Finally in good terms with your 'in-law', huh?"

"We're getting there, Krys, slowly but surely. Besides, loves conquers all, right?"

Krystal grimaced immediately. "Ew! Corny!"

"Oh, come on! Let me be!"

"Just shut up and take your flowers now," said Krystal, handling Lisa the bouquet she ordered. "What's with those, by the way? I bet you've done something to piss Jennie again, huh?"

"Well," Lisa started, scrunching up her face, "let's just say that we haven't seen each other for a week... and I missed our third anniversary."

Krystal's eyes widened. "What?! Jeez. You're in big trouble, Lisa. BIG trouble."

"I know, I know. The queen even scolded me for making the princess upset," Lisa sighed. "I told Jennie I'll be out with my dad for three days only but something came up. We had to stay in Jeju for a week."

"Let me know the address of your funeral so I could send you flowers, okay?"

"You're crazy, Krys."

"Good luck with Jennie later."

"I'll call you if I make out alive."

Lisa had to walk back a few blocks from the flower shop where she had parked her car. Out of nowhere, she spotted a familiar figure walking on the other side of the street holding a coffee.

Short legs, slim figure, and that sexy signature walk; she could not be mistaken. The woman might have had changed her hairstyle and might be dressing a bit more different now but Lisa surely knows who she is.

Without having second thoughts she crossed the road and followed the figure.

"Uhhh, excuse me.. miss...?"

The woman turned around and her eyes widened right away. "L-lisa?"

"I knew it was you, Joo-hyun!"

"Oh, Lali!" The two hugged right away. "Oh my gosh! How are you?"

"I'm good. How about you?"

"Still the same," said Irene, pulling back from the hug to observe Lisa from head to foot. "Wow, what are you doing here?"

"Just some errands. How about you, are you on vacation or something?"

"Well, I'm kind of stuck here in Seoul."

"Really? Did you quit your job?"

"Uh, sort of?" Irene chuckled. "Not really but Kyungsoo and I have decided to build a modeling agency and we're kind of in a startup stage right now."

"Wow. For real?"

"Yeah, why you looked surprised?"

"Well, I'm managing a studio with my dad after I quit my job two years ago," said Lisa.

"Wow! Are you serious? What a coincidence! I'm actually thinking of which photographer we should get. Would you be happy to provide your services to an old friend?"

"It'll be my pleasure, mademoiselle." Lisa pulled out a wallet and handed Irene a calling card. "There. Contact me anytime you like."

Irene stared at the card with a smile plastered on her face. "I guess you're doing what you've really wanted now, hmm?"

"Yeah, it gives me a sense of completion."

"That's nice. And thanks for this," said Irene, waving the card. "Expect a call from me anytime soon."

Lisa nodded. "So.. you two are still together, huh?"

"Yeah, still fighting," said Irene, balling a hand in a fist. "How about you? I assume those flowers are for a special girl, right?"

Lisa glanced at the flowers, didn't realize that she was holding it while following Irene. "Yeah..."

"Is it for the same girl three years ago?"

"Mmm-mmm, same girl."

Irene ran a hand through her hair. "Oh, I knew it, Lisa, I knew she's the one for you."

Lisa absently scratched her head while blushing.

"It's been three years already, right?" asked Irene.

Lisa nodded. She knew that Irene isn't talking about Jennie this time.

Irene stared down at her coffee. "Can't believe that three years just flew like that so fast..."

Lisa pressed her lips together, hesitating to say what's on her mind. "It's okay for me now to say that I missed you?"

Irene looked back at Lisa, smiling. "Of course, I missed you too, Lali!"

Lisa let out a loud exhale of relief upon hearing that. "So.. uhm.. are we good now?"

"I think so. I assumed 3 years has healed us both, right?"

Lisa hummed to agree. I just hope you won't go away this time around."

"There's no reason to run away anymore, Lisa."

"Does that mean we could hang out with Jisoo again like before?"

"Why not include Jennie and Kyungsoo in the circle? And whoever is Jisoo's current girlfriend because she changes from time to time, right?"

Lisa laughed. "Don't worry. She's in a steady relationship now."

"Oh, I guess everything's falling in the right place, huh?"

"Couldn't agree more."

Irene looked at her wristwatch and sighed. "As much as I want to talk to you, Lali, I really have to go now."

"Where are you going? Want me to drive you?"

"No need. My place is just there," said Irene, pointing at the near building. "I just went out to get a coffee. Kyungsoo's waiting for me inside."

"Oh, I see." Lisa stared at the building. It took her long enough before realizing that Irene is staring at her. "What?" asked Lisa, feeling a little conscious.

"You look good. Jennie's taking care of you well.."

"You still look as amazing as ever, Irene," said Lisa, gesturing her head.
"And I'm surprised that you still remember Jennie's name."

"Oh, come on, Lisa, how could I forget her?" Irene chuckled.

"You're right. I wasn't able to forget Kyungsoo's name either."

They went back to being silent again, feeling a little awkward. It's obvious now that they want to talk to each other however this isn't the right time for it yet.

"So, I guess we'll see each other soon?" Irene reached an arm around Lisa's neck and kissed her cheek. "Bye for now, Lisa. It's really nice to see you again."

"Take care," said Lisa, lightly tapping Irene's back.

The two pulled back from the hug. "Uh, Lisa?"

"Yeah?"

"Umm, do you think your girlfriend would mind if I'd go out with you alone one time?"

Lisa looked away with a smirk on her face. She turned back to Irene. "As long as your boyfriend doesn't mind then I think we could really do that. I mean, I'd love to do that."

"You sure?"

"Yeah, as long as I tell Jennie about it then it's fine."

"Tell her it's nothing romantic, just for old times sake, just to catch things up. I missed my Lalisa, you know."

"Don't worry, she'll understand it. And yes, I missed my Joo-hyun too."

"Perfect."

Lisa opened the door to her apartment, her eyes scanned the room, looking for Jennie.

Lisa went inside, checked her bedroom first and found Jennie not in there either. It is when she heard the sound of the running shower did she realize where her girlfriend is. She decided to stay silent so she could surprise Jennie when she gets out.

Lisa put down the flowers on the bedside table and decided to lie down on her bed. She is too tired from the traveling that she didn't notice she was dozing off.

After some time, Lisa felt trickles of water droplets on her face. She tiredly opened her eyes just to see a curtain of wet hair in her view.

"Uh..." Lisa tried but she couldn't move because Jennie's weight is on top of hers.

Jennie is smiling wildly. She poked Lisa's cheek. "Hey. I missed you..."

"Oh, how's my baby?" Lisa responded lazily.

Jennie pouted, resting her head on Lisa's chest. "You missed our anniversary.." she said, wagging her feet.

Lisa caged her girlfriend in her arms and realized that Jennie's only wearing a towel around her body. "Oh, I'm sorry. One of dad's major clients moved the meeting a few days after the planned one."

"You shouldn't have come with him." said Jennie, looking up.

"I know. I won't next time," said Lisa, running her hands on Jennie's hair.
"Or better yet, I should bring you with me."

Jennie smiled and brought her head in the crook of Lisa's neck. Not too long she started sniffing. Before Lisa could react to it Jennie got off her and fixed the towel on her body.

"Tsk. Gosh, Lisa, who is it this time?"

"Huh?" Lisa knew what those looks meant. She's done something wrong and she needs to figure out what it is.

"You met up with a woman before you went here, right?"

"Y-yeah, I went to Krystal's to buy you flowers," said Lisa, pointing at the bedside table.

Jennie sighed. "I'm already familiar with Krystal's perfume, Lisa, and it isn't hers. So tell me, who it is now? Is she one of those models who loves hugging you?"

Lisa sat up on the bed. "Hey, why are you talking like I'm cheating on you?"

"I didn't say that, okay?" Jennie folded her arms across her chest and rolled her eyes. "I'm just noticing how you love being around your models."

"It's because our work requires that we have to get along well. But you have to understand that it's purely work, Jennie..."

"Work," Jennie scoffed. "Perfect excuse to flirt around. Does work includes one of them kissing you on the cheek?"

"Ugh..." Lisa covered her face with her palms in irritation. "How many times should I tell you that she was a new model?"

"Could you blame me for getting mad? She kissed you in front of me, Lisa, in front of me!" said Jennie, pointing at herself. "Ugh! I swear I could really kill her now if I see her. Ugh!"

"It's because she doesn't know yet that we're together that time, okay? She apologized to me after she found out."

"Admit it, you weren't planning on telling her about us in the first place, right?"

"Huh? Why are you talking like I'm the only one with issues here?"

"What? Are you bringing that one up again?" asked Jennie, walking back and forth around the room. "For your information, what happened to me before was not my fault. The guy assumed that I like him."

"Maybe because you gave him signs?"

"I was just being nice because he's a new employee, Lisa."

"So, being nice means letting him hold your hand, huh?"

"I tripped on the stairs, Lisa, for goodness sake!" said Jennie, ruffling her hair in frustration. "Why don't you just believe me?"

Lisa sighed loudly and massaged her temples with her fingers. There was an awful silence in the room while the two were waiting for someone to surrender first. After a short while, Lisa decided to stand up and walk to Jennie to hug her from behind.

"Don't touch me," said Jennie, irritated.

"Hey, baby, look, I'm sorry, okay?" whispered Lisa, wrapping her arms around Jennie's waist. "Can we not fight now? We haven't seen each other for a week and I missed you so much..."

Jennie finally softened. She hugged Lisa's arm around her and partly turned her head aside to glance at her lover. "I'm sorry too. I didn't mean to suspect you of anything."

Lisa hooked her chin on Jennie's shoulder. "Believe me, I have not thought of cheating on you, Jennie, not even once."

Jennie gave a quick peck on the cheek. "Do you still love me?"

"Of course, I do. Always."

"Even though I act like a child at times?"

Lisa smirked. "That's why you're my baby, right?"

Jennie turned around and wrapped her arms around Lisa's neck. "I love you, honey. I love you."

"Oh, I love you too." Lisa pulled back from the hug and brushed the stray hair away from Jennie's face. She leaned over for a kiss.

Jennie immediately stopped Lisa. "Wait, not yet..."

"What? Why?"

"Tell me honestly, who is it that you met today?"

"Oh, that. You really don't forget things easily." Lisa smiled.

"Of course, I should keep track of your fangirls. Now tell me, who is it this time?"

Lisa hesitated at first but continued. "It was Irene."

"Oh. You didn't tell me she's here..."

"I didn't know. It wasn't planned. I ran into her today and we hugged like twice so I smelled like her perfume now."

"So.. what did you guys talk about?"

"Just quick catching up, how is she, where is she working, you know, just stuff..."

"Is she single?"

Lisa smiled. "Hmm, don't tell me you're jealous of her too?"

Jennie pouted and looked away.

Lisa pinched Jennie's chin with her fingers. "Hey, hey. Don't need to be jealous. She's still with Kyungsoo, okay?"

"But that doesn't mean you cannot have feelings for each other, right?"

"Hey, it's not like that..." Lisa cupped Jennie's face to turn in to her. "You know what I realized when I saw her? I realized that what we had before is just past of the past; that I'm really over her now. My world doesn't revolve around her anymore."

"Hmp."

"Hey, stop worrying. Irene and I are impossible, okay?"

Jennie turned to her with her puppy eyes. "Are you sure you're not gonna leave me for her?"

"Of course I won't. Where did you get that notion?"

"I'm just worried," said Jennie, looking down. "I really can't imagine my life now without you in it."

"Aww, my poor baby," said Lisa, hugging her girlfriend tightly. "I wouldn't want to leave your side either. I can't even contain that thought of some other guy taking care of you. I won't let you go that easily, Jennie, even you want to break free from me."

Jennie smiled at that. "You've got to keep your word."

"I surely would."

Lisa kissed Jennie's forehead, down to her nose, and eventually capturing her lips. It was a kiss with enthusiasm since they've been missing each other for days now.

Getting carried away, Lisa slowly led Jennie to lean back against the nearest wall; one hand around her waist and one hand supporting Jennie's head. Lisa's hand slowly reached up to remove the towel which has been separating their bodies.

"And what are you doing?" asked Jennie, stopping Lisa.

Lisa leaned an arm against the wall. "Uhm, don't you think it's getting a bit hot in here?" she asked, tracing a finger on Jennie's collarbone.

"You just need a cold shower."

"You think so?" Lisa's fingers were trailing on Jennie's shoulder this time.
"Do you think you could shower with me?"

"I just came from the shower, Lisa..."

"But I thought you missed me?" Lisa pouted exaggeratedly.

"I do, but I still have a meeting with mom's haute couture in an hour," said Jennie, rubbing their nose together.

"Wow. So they're really tying the knot?"

"Mmm-mmm. Well, you should be happy, right? Ever since he came my mom has been light on you."

"Yeah, I have to agree to that."

"And since you're here you might want to pick something to wear too."

"Wait, am I invited?"

"Of course," said Jennie. "You should be invited. Haven't you received an invitation yet?"

Lisa shrugged.

Jennie scratched her head. "Oh. I'll talk to her about it."

"No need, Jennie. I perfectly understand. It might really take her time to accept me, okay?"

"But it's been three years, Lisa. What does she want you to prove to her?"

"We'll get there soon, don't worry. But before that, you're forgetting something..." Lisa stopped, kissing Jennie again.

Ding! Ding!

Jennie was the first one who pulled away from the kiss first. "I think you should get that," she said, walking towards the closet.

Lisa rolled her eyes. "Ugh. Disturbance. Did you order something?"

"Nope."

"Maybe they got the wrong room number?"

Ding! Dong!

"Nope, it's really for you, Lalisa. Now go and get it."

"Ugh..."

"Or do you want me to get it for you while I'm wearing this?"

Lisa rolled her eyes again. "Fine. Don't get dressed yet, okay?"

"Whatever." Jennie chuckled.

"Delivery for Lalisa Manoban?"

"Yup, it's me."

"Please sign here."

After signing the paper, the delivery man gave Lisa a brown envelope. It was from Jennie's mom.

Lisa opened the envelope and found a wedding invitation card and two plane tickets.

Lastly, she found a small note inside. Lisa's lips lined a smile after reading it.

"What's that?" said Jennie, peeking from the bedroom.

"Your mom just sent me an invitation for her wedding," said Lisa, walking back to the room.

"Oh, see? I knew she'd invited you."

"It's not only that," Lisa continued, placing the envelope on the edge of the bed, "she sent us plane tickets to Paris as an anniversary gift."

Jennie, who's now busy in the closet, stopped for a second. "Wow. This is the first time she's done that, right?"

"Yeah, I'd have to thank her boyfriend for that, haha!"

"You really should. Maybe we should buy them present soon, what do you think?" asked Jennie, rummaging through the closet.

"Hey, what are you doing?"

"Choosing my clothes, why?"

"Who says you can change now, huh?" said Lisa, grabbing Jennie by the waist.

"Lisaaaaa!" Jennie squealed and shrieked with laughter.

"No, you're not going anywhere, young lady." Lisa half carried and half dragged Jennie towards the bed.

Jennie tried to fight back but Lisa has already thrown her on the bed and falls on top of her. "Lisa, I still have an appointment, okay?"

"I know, and I'll drive you there, don't worry, we'll go there together." Lisa playfully kisses Jennie on her neck and shoulders. "Mmm! You smell nice."

Jennie couldn't control her giggling. "Lisa.. can we.. can we do this later? I don't want to be late."

Lisa gave Jennie a mischievous smile as she runs her fingers playfully over the towel. "I'll help you change then."

Jennie flinched immediately, stopping Lisa's hand from removing the towel on her body. "Nah-uh, I swear I'm gonna shout for help if you do that."

Lisa looked down at Jennie with amazement. "Wow. But do you seem excited about it, huh?"

Jennie laughed at that. "Seriously, Lisa, I really should change now."

"Well, I'm serious not letting you go that easily, princess."

Lisa pinned her victim's hand down on either side of her head and launched to execute her evil plan.

"Lisa! LISA!" Jennie's mixed chuckle and squeals echoed through the room.

The brown envelope fell from the bed with the small note, invitation, and plane tickets scattered on the floor. The note was turned on the side where it reveals the what's written on it: *Lalisa,*

I could never thank you enough for taking care of my daughter these past three years. I know that dealing with me wasn't easy on your part but I'm still glad that you managed to stick with me and Jennie.

I've sent you plane tickets as an anniversary gift. I hope you both stay happy and that you continue to love my daughter especially now that I'll be somebody's wife again soon.

I hope to see you, your dad and your aunt at my wedding!

Love,

Mom

P.S.

Welcome to the family :)

--- FIN ---